

Homespun Harbor News

Time Flies!

You know, we don't want to say anything, but hey, where the heck does the time go? One day Ghleanna says, "I have to start working on the Newsletter.". Then we turn around and the Newsletter is 6 weeks late! Remember when the time between Summer vacation and Christmas was an eternity? Now, just around the time the kids get out of school, we are already behind schedule for all those Holiday gifts we planned on making! We are in the process of putting out our Halloween/Fall/Christmas collections. People (people who are not quilters) always are stunned when they see Halloween fabric on the shelves in June. Our pat answer is "Well, if you are going to make a quilt or two by Halloween, you had better get started soon!" We say this with confidence and from experience. For the last 3 years we have fallen way short of all the stuff we wanted to give as gifts. Here is an example. One year Ghleanna wanted to make a quilt for a friend for Christmas. BUT, she didn't have time, so she wrapped up the fabric and gave that as a gift, with the promise to make it soon. They were thrilled. The next Christmas she wrapped up the finished TOP - with the promise to finish it soon. They were thrilled. The NEXT Christmas she wrapped up the quilted (but not bound) quilt with the promise to finish it soon. They were thrilled. The following Christmas she wrapped up the finished quilt (which was finally bound, but only because Sheila couldn't stand it any longer and grabbed the quilt and did the binding). They were no longer thrilled, they were SHOCKED! Luckily, it wasn't a baby quilt! But we think a lot of us have similar quilts. Maybe not SO extreme, just quilts we really want to finish, but never seem to accomplish. We have decided to concentrate on smaller projects. Everyone loves Table Runners. And we can't think of anyone who would not love a Lap Quilt! We made a couple of tablecloths a while back. They are GREAT! For one we used the new "Layer Cake" squares. The squares are all from the same line, so it was easy to find just the right color and theme. We chose a big overall quilting pattern because it would have a softer feel and drape nicely. If you know someone who doesn't need a quilt, but would LOVE a specially tailored tablecloth unique to their kitchen, then this may be the perfect gift!



Remember, that clock is ticking!

The Way We Were - The Way We Are NOW!

This is SO funny! We have read the "advice" before, but never saw a response! We LOVE IT! Sandy Brawner of Quilt Country recently posted this on a Quilt Shop site. (Sandy is the wonderful designer of the pattern "Hot Flashes" which, as many of you know, was our 2007 Block Of The Month) She graciously gave us permission to pass this on to all of you. Trust us, it's priceless!

The first paragraph is an excerpt from the 1949 Singer Sewing Manual and the response in the second paragraph is from a good friend of Sandy's..

Advice from a 1949 Singer Sewing Manual

Prepare yourself mentally for sewing. Think about what you are going to do. . . never approach sewing with a sigh or lackadaisically. Good results are difficult when indifference predominates. Never try to sew with a sink full of dirty dishes or beds unmade. When there are urgent housekeeping chores, do these first so your mind is free to enjoy your sewing. . .

When you sew, make yourself as attractive as possible. Put on a clean dress. Keep a little bag full of French chalk near your sewing machine to dust your fingers at intervals. Have your hair in order, powder and lipstick put on . . . If you are constantly fearful that a visitor will drop in or your husband will come home and you will not look neatly put together, you will not enjoy your sewing as you should. . .

Oh, yeah? Well, how about this instead:

Prepare yourself mentally for sewing. Turn the radio to a classic rock station and set the volume at a level so that you will not be distracted by the phone, doorbell, smoke alarm, barking dogs or sirens. Throw a dishtowel over the dirty dishes and close the bedroom door if the bed is unmade so that you don't have to look at it. Put on some sweats and flip-flops and pin your hair back so that it won't get in your way. Get a coaster for your Shiner Bock or Diet Dr. Pepper and a bowl for your M&Ms. Sew until it is time to order pizza, and then sew some more.

My my my, how times have changed!



Sheila came up with this great idea! Do you put your blocks up on a design wall, and then have to take them down in order.. And somehow it never works out? We have used Post It notes, but it's a pain. Sheila took white flower head pins and gave them alphabetical letters and numbers. What she does is letter the rows (A for the top, B for the second row, etc) Then on each pin she puts a number next to the letter. (A1 is the first block in the left top corner, A2 is next) She places the pins in the upper left corner of each block. That way she knows which side to sew, and which is the right direction for the block. It works GREAT! When she is finished she rubber bands all the A pins together, B's together etc. so when she is ready for the next quilt everything is in order. It is an inexpensive way to label your blocks and if you need more for a larger quilt, you just mark a few more pins! If this doesn't make ANY sense at all, just drop by and we will show you.

Another way to keep track of your blocks came from Dennis. He was making the blue and brown Between Friends quilt, and knew it would be taken off the design wall before he got around to sewing the rows together. So, Mr. Gadget took a picture! Worked great, and he didn't freak out when Ghleanna pulled the quilt off the wall!

Here is a GREAT idea for a portable ironing board. GREAT for classes. You know all those cardboard bolt boards that we toss out EVERYDAY? Well, just wrap a towel around one and VIOLA! Instant travelling ironing board! Drop by and pick one up, trust us, we ALWAYS have a few on hand.

Here's another ironing tip. Turn your ironing board around. You get a lot more ironing space, and the iron sits at the useless tapered end.

Everyone has little pieces of batting hanging around. Cut a small square and pin it to your shirt shoulder. Anytime you have a thread, just smack it up there. A LOT less mess in your sewing room and more importantly a LOT less loose thread on your quilt.

There are all kinds of tips around that have you moving your ironing board next to your machine etc, all to eliminate getting up and down. Actually, that is not such a hot idea. Getting up at regular intervals and moving around is GOOD for us. Your muscles don't cramp, your eyes don't get as tired and the breaks actually make it easier to sew for longer periods of time.

Long Arm Quilting Designs

As most of you know, Anneke Wheaton (The Last Stitch) is the fabulous Longarm quilter in our shop. More than being a technical whiz on her Statler Stitcher (the entire mechanism causes us to shudder) she is gifted with a creative style that goes well beyond technology. She looks at what the quilt "says". She often tests more than a couple dozen threads for the perfect effect. Then she really goes into action. She has well over a thousand quilt patterns to choose from. But if none of those are perfect, she calls in the big guns—better known as Gerry, her husband. Gerry has been designing custom quilt patterns since, well since Anneke got her machine.. If it is a special Cowboy boot, or an antique truck or a unique Asian design, Gerry can do it! From a Mermaid to Day Of The Dead Mariachis, the sky is the limit! And best of all, this design service is FREE! We mean FREE! It's great! Sometimes a customer will look at an established pattern and be like, "That's fine". Anneke will say,,, hmmm Hold on. What if we take this leaf and join it with this flower? If you like, my husband will design it for you!" TADA!



Community Pantry

As we read in the news, and see around us, many people are experiencing hard times. Harder than usual. Here are some numbers:

Compared to the 1st Quarter of 2007 to the first Quarter of 2008 the Food Pantry saw an increase of 33% in meals served! That's a huge jump and is projected to go higher.

66% of all meals served go to children and seniors. The pantry is also seeing an increase in families that never thought they would need assistance from a food pantry.

The pantry served more than 80,000 meals per month for the 1st Quarter of 2008 This does not provide 3 meals a day for people. But it does provide stable healthy food for families in need. Most families are either able to subsidize with their own income to provide other needed meals, and government agencies also help families to cope. The pantry, for many years, was out by the airport and didn't have to pay rent. They were forced to move to a new location in November of 2006, and now pay rent of approximately \$50,000 per year. Sadly the time they had to start to pay rent also coincided with in increase in need. Because of higher food prices, staples, such as rice, beans, flour etc, cost more and the challenge will be even greater. And costs are expected to rise. You can help by:

Donating food to barrels around the county. We always have one at the shop.

A cash gift to the Food pantry (this can also be done on a monthly basis from a credit card) You can call 831 637-0340 for details,

Volunteering time to pack bags

Ask your corporation to make donations

Check in your neighborhood, church etc to see if there is anyone in need and let them know about the Pantry.

Every little bit helps. And if we each do a little bit we can make sure no one goes hungry in San Benito County!

Best Press Refill Service

We belong to a consortium of Quilt Shop owners who share ideas, concerns and hopefully solutions. We recently got a REALLY helpful idea! Do you use the fabulous Mary Ellen's BEST PRESS Clear Starch Alternative? If you haven't tried it, you really should! It is a "spray starch" that is light and never leaves that white residue. We like it so much, we use it for everything.



We sell the 16 fluid ounce bottle for \$7.50 and we sell the gallon refill for \$45.00. But if you are anything like us, shelling out \$45.00 for spray starch is hard, even if you LOVE IT. Well, we have the solution!!! (no pun intended) You can now bring in your empty bottle, and we will fill it up for \$5.60. And of course we will fill it with the fragrance of your choice! How cool is that? You get your Best Press a bottle at a time, without having to pay for a gallon, or a new bottle! We are only upset that we didn't think of this first, and sooner!

Shop Hop By The Bay June 25th Through June 29th

Shop Hop By The Bay is almost here! We're already suffering anxiety attacks, so we know it's soon!

This year there are 13 shops participating from San Mateo to Monterey Bay. If you visit ALL of the shops during the 5 days, you will be entered to win fabulous prizes.

The Grand Prize is a week at Asilomar at an Empty Spools Retreat!!!!

We have a KIDS Grand Prize! A sewing machine worth \$350.00!!

The First Prize is a Shopping Spree! A \$25.00 Gift Certificate from each store!

Each shop has a special charm to give away. Not a charm of fabric, a real charm to put on a bracelet! If you complete the entire Hop, you'll receive the bracelet!

This year Homespun Harbor will be featuring "The Men In Your Life" We will have a variety of quilts geared toward our "Other Half"

Gas prices are an issue for all of us this year. Now is the time to plan to grab a group of fellow quilters, commandeer a van and split the cost of that gas!

For all the rules, prizes, maps etc. please go to www.shophopbythebay.com

Homespun Harbor Ltd.
341 Tres Pinos Rd #101
Hollister, CA 95023

(831) 630-9438

Email: homespunharbor@aol.com

Website: www.homespunharbor.com

Yikes! Again!

Yes, once again postage has gone up! Pretty soon it will be cheaper to personally drive letters to each and every person. (Okay, THAT'S not true - we got carried away for a minute)

Anyway, it still costs a lot. We have asked for email addresses before, with a good response. If you don't have an email address then you can skip the rest of this article. We will still mail you our Newsletter, and postcards for big sales. However, there are times in between Newsletters that we pass on information. Class additions, fabulous new lines, last minute sales and specials to name a few. These will we only be sending out via email. So, if you want to keep up to date with what is happening at Homespun Harbor, please provide us with your email address. Of course our snail mail and our email addresses are NEVER EVER passed on to anyone else!

