



# Bits and Pieces

**Brazos Bluebonnet Quilt Guild Newsletter**

**Volume 43. Number 9**

## *A few words from Denise...*

Your BBQG Board of Directors has been working very hard to find ideas that can help to get the Guild through this pandemic. We continue to learn how to manage virtual gatherings. I appreciate everyone who has attended a virtual meeting and those who have helped us to try out options with the virtual meetings.

The Board has been in contact with other quilt guilds to share information on how everyone is handling their quilt guild. Everyone seems to be working in similar ways to keep in touch with the membership. We also found ways to provide virtual content to offer education or just fun quilting presentations.

There will not be in-person meetings through the end of the year. Next year, 2021, should start out the same with no in-person meetings. As the pandemic continues, the Board will keep updated with the guidance from the Health Department and the Governor's Office. Guild membership will be kept updated on new information concerning Guild matters.

Please help us to keep in contact with you by logging into Groupworks to see any new postings. As a member of Groupworks, you can post to the BBQG Site if there is anything that you would like to share. There is also a new Facebook site - BBQG Members. Check it out and ask to be invited to join. I would like to send everyone an invite to join the BBQG Members. Send me your Facebook

name and I will send an invite to join the BBQG Members group!

I hope everyone is staying well. And a speedy recovery for those who have fallen ill.

Denise

## *Secretary's Report*

August 2020 Meeting Minutes....

The BBQG held their August monthly meeting virtually via Zoom on August 11, 2020. The meeting began at 7:00 and was attended virtually by 45 guild members.

**Raffle Quilt** – Denise Mackan encouraged members to sell/purchase raffle tickets for our current raffle quilt made by Sharon Braunagle. Sales are behind previous years due to Covid restrictions preventing us from taking the quilt to events to sell tickets. Proceeds are used for our scholarships each year. Donna Bracewell has graciously offered to fill out tickets for those who send in money to the Guild Post Office address. Please note in the memo line on your check “raffle tickets”.

**Show and Tell** – Sue Chrysler presented a power point of completed quilts members submitted. Members have been busy and we greatly appreciate them sharing their work. Please send Sue pictures of your quilts and any comments you

have about them for next month's meeting. You may send your pictures to [Sue\\_Chrysler@hotmail.com](mailto:Sue_Chrysler@hotmail.com)

**Mini Quilt Show** – Donna Bracewell reviewed the procedures for viewing the Mini Quilt Show. The Show will be a PDF in Groupworks for members to view. Members may then vote for their 3 favorites using surveymonkey.com. A link will be in the Groupworks post for members to use to access surveymonkey.

**Program** – Laura North introduce our presenter, Peggy Richards. Peggy is from Willis, Texas. She is an accomplished quilter and described herself as a traditional quilter whose favorite technique is applique. Peggy treated us to a trunk show of her beautiful quilts. If you missed her presentation, she has a facebook page on which she has posted several of her quilts. Her Facebook page is "Trunk Shows by Peggy".

**Programs** – Laura North announced there would be no programs October through December and it is likely programs in 2021 will be on Zoom. She is also trying to schedule workshops through Zoom.

The Zoom event ended with members in Break Out Rooms for small group discussions.

The Zoom meeting was concluded at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Kirkpatrick

## *Treasurer's Report*

**For the Month of July 2020**

### **Checking**

Beginning Balance -	
Checking per bank	
Deposits Made	
Checks Cleared	
Ending Balance per Bank	
Less Outstanding Checks	
Ending Balance - Checking per Register	

### **Savings**

Beginning Balance -	
Savings per Bank	
Interest Received	
Transfers to Checking	
Ending Balance - Savings	

Total Cash Balance

### **\* Outstanding checks**

1746	50.00
1760	50.00
Total	100.00

Submitted by Susan Beasley

## Program Notes...

The Board has established a Zoom Account so we can continue to "meet" electronically. Members and Bees are encouraged to use this resource to host your own gatherings--seeing friends' faces will ease the pains of separation. Please contact Denise Mackan if you are interested in accessing the BBQG zoom account to set up your own event.

Coming soon via Zoom: Donna Bracewell volunteered to host a free workshop on how to make zipper bags. Her husband, Warren Bracewell, volunteered to host a free workshop on how to clean your featherweight. Thank you to the Bracewells for volunteering.

If you are interested in volunteering to present a program or "how-to" demo via zoom or in a physical meeting after the pandemic subsides, please get in touch with me.

Stay Safe, best wishes,  
Laura North, Program Chair

### April 2021 Program Note:

Register Now to Zoom with Krista Moser on Saturday, April 24, 2021, as she teaches us "Double Struck Star." Members may register now by emailing Laura North and then sending a check to Laura for \$25 made out to BBQG; Nonmembers (\$35) may register after October 1, 2020. Pattern and Ruler will cost an additional \$40; please make this check payable to Laura North. Registration for this workshop is limited to 20 people and will close on March 15, 2021. The supply list is available on Groupworks or by email to Laura North ([lbnorth@gmail.com](mailto:lbnorth@gmail.com)).

(Cancellation policy: a waiting list will be maintained once the workshop is full. If you must cancel and we can find a participant to take your place, you will receive a refund. No refunds on patterns or rulers unless someone else agrees to purchase your order. There will be no refunds for the instruction if a replacement cannot be found.)



Don't miss our October meeting when we will share a 50-minute PowerPoint by Rhonda Dort. She will share ordinary things that women before us created to brighten their homes and give them a chance to shine again. She will cover a wide variety of vintage linens including laces and trims, ladies' handkerchiefs, antimacassars, luncheon cloths, etc., as well as her tried and true method of cleaning these linens and quilting them.

Visit [rhondadort.com](http://rhondadort.com) to see her beautiful work.

Mark your calendar now so that you don't miss our meeting starting at 7 p.m., Tuesday, October 13, via zoom.

## *Mini Quilt Show*

**Reminder:** The deadline for voting is September 1st. Members will only be allowed to submit one voting ballot each.

Many thanks to Donna Bracewell for her work in setting up the slide show and making the process easy for all members in these unusual times.

## *Donation Quilt...There's Still Time*

There's still time to purchase tickets for the donation quilt drawing to be held on September 15.

To purchase additional tickets, send a check made out to BBQG (with *raffle quilt tickets* written in the check memo line) to:

[BBQG.org](http://BBQG.org)

P.O. 9497

College Station, TX 77842

Please include a note with the name to be on written on the ticket(s), and a contact phone number. We will fill out the tickets for you, and put them in the drawing.

**Tickets are \$1.00 each, or 6 tickets for \$5.00, so a great value for \$5.00, and the drawing is September 15th!**



If you prefer to fill out your own tickets, let us know, and we will mail them to you. (You will need to mail them back completed with your check so that your tickets are received by Sept. 15th.)

*Terry Skrabanek*  
Owner

Exquisite Fabrics  
Notions, Patterns, Books, Classes  
Authorized BabyLock Retailer  
Handi Quilter Rep

**LONE★STAR**  
*Quiltworks*

4301A S. Texas Ave.  
Bryan, TX 77802  
www.lonestarquiltworks.com

(979) 595-1072  
FAX (979) 595-1074  
lonestarquiltworks@suddenlink.net

**Norma's Embroidery & Quilt Studio**

310 Stoney Hills Court  
College Station, TX 77845

**Norma Reel**  
**586-770-7166**

**normajeankilts@gmail.com**

www.njbestquilts.com

*Long Arm Quilting Magic*



## *Bee News...*

Here is a repeat from the Material Girls Bee...with the pictures!

The **Material Girls** have been busy.



Mary Jane is doing UFO's  
and kits that have been  
sitting awhile.

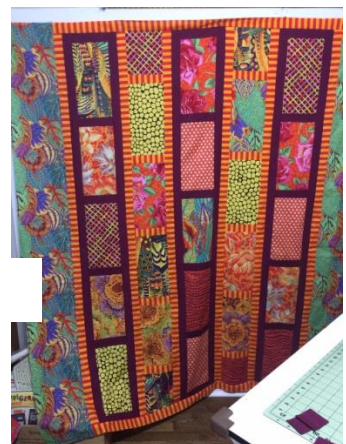


Nancy has been cleaning her  
sewing room and doing  
quilts.



Sue Idol mad a baby quilt  
while waiting to close on a new house

Susan Beasley has been making  
quilts for family



Jeanne Rierson has finished her Aborigines quilt and a baby quilt as well.



## *Show and Tell*



Bunny Douglas  
Quilted by Laura North



Charles Gilreath  
Round Robin Practice





Alma Fonseca



"Cooper"  
Thread painting  
Bonnie Piernot



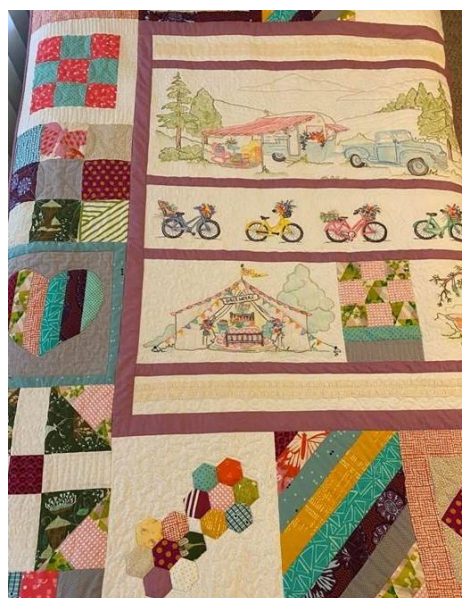
Denise Macken  
Fabric Boxes



Luci Smith  
Quilted by Laura North



Stars and Stripes  
Luci Smith  
Quilted by Laura North



"Girls Getaway"  
Luci Smith  
Quilted by Laura North





Nancy Searcy



Nancy Searcy  
Gypsy Garden Party



Penny Grief



Penny Grief





Penny Grief



Sue Chrysler  
2003 Retreat Block Lottery



Sue Chrysler  
Card Trick

## *In Their Own Words...*

*(Because we have not had meetings, workshops or other activities to report in the newsletter, I have tried to identify newsletter content that I thought everyone might enjoy reading. This month I hope you enjoy learning a little more about some of your friends in the guild...in their own words. I sent a variety of questions to different people and asked for their response in addition to any other quilting stories they wanted to share. So the following are ...**In their own words!**)*

## **Carol Willson**

Before I moved to Texas, I took a class offered by the local extension service in South Dakota. Using sand paper for templates we measured and cut half square triangles of the available calico fabrics. Then we assembled the squares into a pattern. I ended up making large squares for two pillows, which I still have.

My Mom is the one who really started me into quilting. She had been following Eleanor Burns and Quilt in a Day on TV. Eleanor came to Texas in the mid 80's and we made a log cabin quilt top together. It was so fun. We made enough log cabin blocks for a full size bed quilt. I finally found batting and backing and we tied the quilt. Years later I had it machine quilted so it would hold up better.

So, I've been quilting for quite a few years. I've taken classes offered by the quilt guild. I like traditional patterns like log cabin and the bow tie. Paper piecing is a lot of fun for me, especially miniatures. I've won several ribbons in this category. Since I've won several block of the month squares, they became completed quilts. Over the years I have gotten braver and tried larger projects. Finishing a Cynthia England pattern was an accomplishment for me, though at times intimidating.

My husband and I collect quilts. He appreciates the art and craft. A grandmother's flower garden and a double ring wedding quilt are two in our collection.

For new quilters I recommend trying new things. You always learn something. I enjoy being a member of our guild and encourage anyone to visit us. Learn the basics, make new friends and you will appreciate a new hobby and art form.

## **Charles Gilreath**

I started quilting about 8 or 9 years ago. I have known how to sew for quite a while, but when my mother began to lose her sight and could no longer cut pieces accurately for her own quilts, I started cutting them for her. One thing led to another. I began to cut pieces then I also began to put together, and before I knew it I was a quilter, too.

Both my wife Ann and I were librarians, so when books and a blanket came about we were drawn to it first because of its focus on literacy, and the "blanket" part was a bonus that related to our interest in quilting. It has proven to be a godsend as well for my 94 year old mother, who is able to remain productively engaged in a meaningful activity that benefits children throughout this area. (She actually makes more quilts per year for them than I do--although I do spend a good deal of time on each of her quilts: cutting pieces, sewing on borders, making backs, and binding.)

Because of the current environment for protecting the privacy of children in the schools, we rarely get to see the children actually get their quilts. The stories that get reported back to us by the Cunningham family are very heartwarming. We were amused a couple of years ago when they reported that one mother called the school after her child brought home a quilt. She was concerned that her son had "lifted" the teacher's quilt and claimed it for his own.



We have had the chance on a couple of occasions to help distribute quilts to pre-schoolers at one of the College Station schools. The classes often have a number of children of foreign graduate students, and the parents of those children expressed delight at having something that was a distinctive American folk craft to take back to their countries as a memento of their stay here.

In terms of the patterns I use for the kits that I make up for the monthly Books and a Blanket workshops, I am pretty much a Jenny Doan groupie. Many of her tutorials feature blocks that are very straightforward in construction, so I often wind up adapting one of the patterns she presents in her tutorials to fit a smallish lap quilt size.

Up to this point I have generally enjoyed piecing the most, but inspired by Sharon Braunagel, I have started doing more paper piecing. I have now done enough of that that it is beginning to be "fun." Initially my machine quilting was pretty much general meandering, but over the past couple of years I have managed to do enough practicing on real quilting motifs that the results are beginning to look pretty good and that is satisfying as well. (My great discovery is that by using thread that exactly matches the fabric, my quilting suddenly become "perfect"!)

My best advice to beginning quilters would be to enjoy the process and don't beat yourself up over slip ups or less than show quality results. Just keep doing it and things will get better.

## **Pam Unnasch**

At the end of September of 2019, I was able to take a trip with my parents and my sister to Missouri Star Quilt Shops for their 11th Annual Birthday Bash. This was a bucket list item for my mom who is in her 80's. Since my mother, my sister, and I all quilt, it was something we all looked forward to. I had made reservations well in advance to stay in a convenient little Inn that had come highly recommended by some ladies that had attended the 10th Birthday Bash the prior year. We drove to ensure we'd have plenty of room to bring back our treasures.

I had been to Hamilton a couple years before with my parents for a Missouri to Ohio Amish trip, but had only spent a short time in the small city. Each year, the Birthday Bash has a centralized theme that is shown in everything as it relates to the 4 day event. Last year the theme was a Hawaiian Luau.

The Birthday Bash starts off with a catered opening dinner that introduces Jenny Doan and her children who run the company with her. Although there are more than 300 people attending (at a church hall), you have a very 'close' encounter with the Doan's as they open the event and give a history of their family and how they became such a large part of the quilting world. Missouri Star has a wonderful story of how they came into Hamilton and began buying and restoring the old buildings in their main street area. As the boyhood home of J.C. Penney, they have a shop called Penney's Quilt shop.

There are prizes to be won at each event, and a nice tent area where vendors (Shannon Fabrics, Clover, Free Spirit, etc.) offer games and opportunities to win different gifts as well. The registration goody bag included a tee shirt and various other freebies.

We had a good amount of time between the different activities that we signed up for to visit their 13 different quilt shops, each uniquely centered around specific themes (batiks, seasonal, florals, kids & babies, primitive and wools, etc.). I enjoyed visiting each of the 13 different shops (sometimes multiple times) to experience the amazing displays, wonderful sample projects, and of course the beautiful fabric. During this event, they have fat quarters in several of the shops marked at \$1/each. There were a number of notable quilters giving brief demonstrations in shops. I was especially happy to see Sue Daley for her English Paper Piecing.

Our trip was made even better with a day to travel outside of Hamilton about 20 minutes away into the Amish area of Jamesport, Missouri. The Amish homes, fields, and barns are always so beautifully maintained and it's a special treat to stop at their bakeries, dry goods stores, quilt shops, and home cooking restaurants. I think going into the Amish area is something not to be missed.

It's sad that there won't be a Birthday Bash this year, and I am concerned about the community of Hamilton because of how much they all rely on jobs and other aspects of travel from the quilters who visit their Quilt Town U.S.A. I am sure they are busy during this 'closed' time period building even more aspects of their town and creating another shop for their newly acquired Nancy's Notions business.

Until I am able to travel there again, hopefully with some of my quilting friends, I hold these memories close.

### **Jane Riggs**

I have quilts made from feed sacks from both of my grandmothers. I thought this was how quilts were supposed to look. But then in 2004, I took a class with Diana De Francesco and discovered different fabrics.

After that class I was hooked. I could not get enough touching fabric. My first quilts were all from Alex Anderson's early books. Then I would see a quilt I liked in magazines (For a while, I think I subscribed to all of them!) and make one of those. Then I started branching out and changing up the patterns to make them more my own. And, oh, how I hate it when I do that. Too much math and experimenting. But I find myself continuing to do it. My greatest enjoyment is sharing my love of quilting with others. I've had the pleasure of helping my daughter-in-law learn to quilt and last summer my seven year old granddaughter wanted to learn to quilt and I helped her make her first quilt. I belong to a Bee that makes many, many care quilts so I often experiment on a small project to see if it's something I want to do on a larger scale.

When I go into a quilt shop, I spend most of my time "visiting" with the fabrics. Many of them become such good friends that they come home with me. It's a good thing, as I often go "shopping" in my closet these days. I have also purchased enough patterns to start my own store. I'm glad my daughter-in-law now quilts as I'll never be able to use all my fabrics and patterns.

My idea of the perfect quilt shop would be one to have sleep over retreats. I'd spend all night with the fabrics. Some of my favorite quilt shops have been visited on vacations. There are several interesting shops in Alaska and I found a couple I liked on other vacations. My husband is VERY thoughtful and is always on the lookout for shops for me to visit. And he is kind enough to carry my fabric home in his carry on. That fabric can really get heavy! I think our own Lone Star Quilt Shop is pretty near perfect.

When I am working on a difficult pattern (Which is rare as I like to make a quilt and move on to the next. So I usually choose easy patterns.), I am motivated to keep going by working in baby steps and thinking of how it will look or be used when it's finished. I smile when I give my quilts away to someone special. But my biggest smiles are when I see people using and enjoying a quilt I've made.

### **Connie Silber**

Thank you for asking me to share part of my quilting and quilt judging journey. For those who have been in the guild for a long time, you may have heard my lecture on 'What the Judge Does' more than once. But there are so many new members and new quilters that I will share part of my quilting and judging journey and some of the things I've learned along the way.

I came to quilting and judging at about the same time and from the same motivation. I lost my temper. My Mother had several family quilts she kept stored in the basement, and my sister and I wanted her to share them with us. Mom was never ready to let the quilts leave her home (First lost temper), so I started to learn to make a quilt. I had sewn extensively and had made a wide variety of garments and costumes. I really did think sewing mostly straight lines could not be that hard. I checked a book out of the library and made two quilts. I entered those first two quilts in a BBQG quilt show. When I received my critique sheets, there was not one....not one positive comment on the entire page. Not even 'Good Effort' or 'Thanks for sharing your quilt'. Just negative comments. (Second lost temper) I decided to join the guild and find out what I had done to receive such an awful critique. I also began to wonder about the quilt judges. Where did they come from? Was there any organization to certify a judge? At that time The National Quilting Association was that organization. I learned that the program was a minimum of 3 years and could be a lot longer. I made two passes through the program and while it was hard to accept two passes through the system, it was a good thing for me. I learned so much more between my first and second passes through the program. I am honored and proud to be one of 53 Certified Judges in America.

Certification under the old National Quilting Association and the new National Association of Certified Quilt Judges (formed when NQA folded) still has two basic parts. Paperwork and panel. Two simple words encompass years of reading and research and volunteer work. The paperwork encompasses almost everything you could imagine about quilt making. It includes your personal quilting and judging history, ethics, and definitions and judging criteria for 30 or more different quilt making techniques. Three different certified judges read and critique the paperwork. You have two attempts to pass your paperwork. If it fails the second time, you leave the program but can reenter later. If you pass your paperwork, you then sit a panel. A different group of three Certified Judges sit on one side of a table and ask you anything they want to know about you and your judging abilities and career. This part also allows two attempts before leaving the program with a later reentry. Certification is a challenging process. It is long and expensive. You do all the travel and volunteer work at your own expense. But when a guild hires a NACQJ Certified Judge, they can be confident that the certified judge will recognize how the quilt was made and the criteria for judging it and to make good decisions. At one point early in the certification process, I seriously considered throwing in the towel. I was so frustrated. It's a hard program. That changed the first time I aided at a show, I knew without a doubt in my mind that this was what I wanted to do. It was like wearing shoes that fit the first time you put them on. It clicked. It made sense. I'm asked if it is overwhelming to enter a large show to judge. No it's not. It's like diving into the best box of chocolates and savoring each and every one. Plus you get to touch and handle the quilts.



I've had a lot of good and some not-so-good experiences travelling and laying hands on the quilts. I have been housed in motels that would have made a great setting for an Alfred Hitchcock thriller. One of my favorite memories is when all five of the Texas certified judges judged a large Texas show together. . We worked so harmoniously that day. We shared special features or new techniques we saw on the quilts we were each judging. 'Come look at this' was heard throughout the day. We had several great discussions about the quilts. My first two categories of the day included Best of Show plus several major special awards. That was a superb box of chocolates! At a different venue, when the judging team arrived, we were handed the forms for the entire show. That's it. No folders or organization. No categories. Nothing. Just paper forms. At the end of a very long day, we judged all the quilts in their correct categories and made good decisions. The hardest judging decision took over 12 hours. We judged and had the Best of Show decision down to two quilts. We debated positives and negatives about each for over an hour at the venue but came to no decision. We continued the discussion well into the night and over breakfast the next morning. We did finally come to an agreement on Best of Show. But today when we get together, we still discuss those two quilts. And it was a discussion of positives and negatives of the quilts. It was never about what any of us liked or disliked in the quilts. To me, that's a big factor in what makes a good judge. It's not what you like. What the judge 'likes' has nothing to do with the decisions. No one should be able to determine what the judge likes or dislikes in a show. It is irrelevant. Decisions are based on each quilt's merits. A good judge can express knowledgeable positive and negative comments to the quiltmaker. A good and professional judge shows up on time. Works the whole day. Does not conduct other business while judging. And never wears "jammies" to judge. The major qualities are integrity, knowledge, good command of the language and lack of bias. And always the judge honors and respects the quilts. The judge holds countless hours or even years of a quilter's work in their hands. A good judge respects and values the work and time spent on each and every one.

I have two often repeated suggestions for all quilters. First is to make visual decisions visually. Put the quilt up where you can see what is happening. Don't assume it looks the same flat as it does vertical. Trust your inner eye to tell you it is right or not. Look at the quilt as you work through each process in making your quilt. Second. Color gets the credit and value does the work. Always check to see that you have a good range of value in your fabrics. Take a picture and dial out the color. Then you can see how the value is working or not working in your quilt. Unless the low value is intended for a particular style of quilt, the lack of value contrast in a quilt can obscure the design and stop or slow the visual movement.

My encouragement especially to new quilters is to take every class you possibly can. Our guild (in non-Covid times) brings in excellent lectures and classes. We have local, regional and national level speakers and teachers. It doesn't matter if you want to learn that particular technique. You will learn something valuable in every class you take. Don't be afraid to try something new or different. Make a piece just to try something new. Just make it and learn. Learn from your mistakes. Read and read and read. Never be afraid to ask a question. Ask and learn. Join a bee or come to the guild work days. We have amazing quilters in our guild and they generously share their talents and knowledge.

It took losing my temper to get me into quilting and judging. I have no regrets. I've seen the acceptance and growth of machine quilting, the development of art quilts, and the use of computers in all phases of quilting from design through the quilting. It's been a wonderful experience to both learn quilting making and become a Certified Judge. I've made friends across the country and touched and judged thousands of quilts. I still love the process of designing and making quilts. I love the excitement of the judging floor and the process of judging quilts. Plus I still have enough fabric to make quilts for a very long time.