



## 4-H Quilts of Valor Guidelines



Community service is a big part of 4-H. 4-Hers and adult volunteers do a tremendous amount of service projects in their communities and beyond. We would like to encourage 4-Hers to continue to “make a difference” by making Quilts of Valor that can be entered in the county and Nebraska State Fairs.



In 2012, over 80 4-H quilts were donated to the National Quilts of Valor Foundation <http://www.qovf.org/index.html>. Over 35 youth attended the quilt presentation to the National Quilts of Valor at the Nebraska State Fair.



Sara Kenny, Nebraska Regional Coordinator, told us that most of the quilts were sent to the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany which is the largest military hospital outside of the United States. **Recently 200 wounded military men and women flew back to their homes in the U.S. It was awesome that ALL 200 SOLDIERS were covered by a comforting Quilt of Valor as they flew back home.**

A recent thank you note found on the Quilt of Valor <http://qovf.blogspot.com/>:

*Dear...*

*I cannot thank you enough for the time, energy, resources and LOVE that you put into making and sending the quilts for our wounded soldiers. We received your box just in time as we had recently run out. One of your quilts went out with a soldier today-he is going to Germany and on to the states. He smiled as we told him it was his to keep and even commented that it “smells like home”. It is a small comfort that reminds them the folks at home care and support them. Sincerely, Staff Sgt. Megan E from the ICU unit in Shank-East, Afghanistan.*

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4-H members and volunteers can work alone or in groups to make the quilts. Perhaps you can find someone who will help donate fabric, batting or machine-quilting to complete your project. You may want to contact a service organization or other donors in your community to help provide funds for the Quilt of Valor.

**GUIDELINES:** Remember, we are honoring our military personnel who are protecting our freedom, so we want the quilt to be of good quality.

### Quilt Top Fabric and Thread:

- 100% good-quality cotton fabric with high thread count (preferably quilt shop fabric – NO cheap or previously used fabrics).
- Soldiers do not want children’s fabrics such as cartoons. 10% of the soldiers receiving quilts are women, so consider whether a man or woman would like the fabric.
- You can or don’t have to pre-wash the fabric.
- Use good quality **cotton** thread for sewing
- Use a quilt pattern of your choice.
- Piece the top so it will be at its finished size - **55” x 65” or no larger than 72” x 90”**.

**Quilt Backing Fabric:** Good quality 100% cotton (NO sheets or bedding). Purchasing “wide” backing fabrics may be more economical. The backing should exceed at least 3" on **all** sides to allow for machine quilting and pinning the backing to the machine. (This is a total of 6-8" wider and 6-8" longer than the quilt top.)

- If you need to make seams on the back, first remove the selvage.
- If needed, seams should run across the width of the quilt backing (parallel to the top and bottom of the backing).

### **Machine Quilting:**

- The quilt should be machine quilted. If you have a “long-arm quilter” in your area, you could ask them to quilt your project for you.
- If you do not have a local long-arm quilter, the Quilts of Valor Foundation has a list of long-arm quilters who will machine quilt it. Fill out the “Request Long-arm Form” at the Quilts of Valor website <http://www.qovf.org/req-longarmer.html> . Once your machine quilting partner is assigned to you, communicate with him/her. Be courteous and send top/backing in a timely fashion.

**Label:** Be sure to add a label to the back of the quilt. The label can be hand written, embroidered, printed or purchased. The label **MUST SAY “Quilt of Valor”**. Include the following information:

- Date range that it took to make the quilt
- Name of the quilt
- Place where the quilt was made. If the long-arm quilter lives in a different place, put both locations.
- Name of Quilt-top maker (4-Her, age, city/state).
- Name of machine quilter, age, city/state
- The words "Presented To:" followed by a blank space. The recipient's name will be added later.

### **Binding:**

- The binding fabric should be an appropriate color for the quilt.
- Straight cut and diagonally seam where necessary (unless edge of quilt is scalloped which requires bias binding).
- Corners mitered.
- Neatly applied by hand and/or machine.

### **Document Your Project:**

- Take digital pictures of you working on your quilt and your finished product.
- Be sure to add your Name, City or County, State, Name of the Quilt, and quilted by\_\_\_\_\_.
- Email your picture [pschoenholz1@unl.edu](mailto:pschoenholz1@unl.edu). Be sure to add your name, county and town in your email. To make sure the computer doesn't read it as “spam”, put **Quilts of Valor** in the subject line. Spell correctly.

**Pillowcase:** Place your quilt in a pillowcase that is purchased or hand made to coordinate with the quilt. The pillowcase helps in packing and transporting the quilt. When a soldier who receives the quilt is discharged from medical facility and is covered with a quilt, the pillowcase is a great place for carrying paperwork and other things.

### **Exhibit at the Fair:**

Consult the current version of the county and/or state fair book to see where to enter your quilt in Citizenship, Quilt Quest or Design Decisions.