



The Festival is Coming!

Timeless Stitches – Quilt Capital of Kansas

Sharon Vesecky

The festival is coming! The festival is coming! Yes, just as it has for 64 years, the 65th Maple Leaf Festival is coming! This year's dates are October 15th & 16th—the third full weekend of October when our fall leaves are expected to be in their finest glory!

The 65th Festival will include the 50th Maple Leaf Quilt Show. The idea of a Quilt Show was conceived by Enola Gish, Helen Booth, Helen Erickson, and Helen Gordon. I remember Enola telling me how excited the four of them were when the Festival Committee agreed to their plan to have a quilt show. Enola was the chairperson of the show for the first 25 years. Then it was held in the multi-purpose room at Baldwin Elementary School. Lowell Gish supported his wife's efforts by staying with the quilts Friday and Saturday nights to assure the quilts' security.

Now the Quilt Show is sponsored by the Maple Leaf Quilters Guild. While most quilt shows limit exhibitors to their membership, The Maple Leaf Quilt Show remains a community show. Anyone who has a quilt that they want to display may do so by submitting a completed information form (found on the Maple Leaf Festival webpage at <https://mapleleaffestival.com/quilt-show>) by October 1 and bringing the quilt to Quilters' Paradise by October 13.

The quilt show usually displays approximately 100 quilts of every size and description. For as long as I can remember kits to make maple leaf blocks have been available for purchase. Six fabrics in fall colors are chosen each year to make the kits. Some visitors to the quilt show collect these maple leaf block kits each year and eventually construct a quilt using the blocks.

This is the first time in recent years that the show is honoring a "Featured Quilter." Our first Featured Quilter is Cathy Miles who has served as Quilt Show Chairwoman for several years. Cathy is an accomplished quilter who will share several of her favorite quilts with us.

Each year the Maple Leaf Quilt Guild constructs a quilt that is offered as a fund raiser for the guild. Tickets for a chance of winning the quilt will be available at the quilt show or from a guild member before the show. Guild members have shown the quilt and had tickets available at this summer's Farmers and Makers Markets on third Friday evenings. The suggested donation is \$1 for one ticket or \$5 for six tickets.

A new fundraiser that the guild started last year was the sale of lap quilts, throws, baby quilts and table runners at the quilt show. These small quilts are made by guild members and offered for sale at very reasonable prices with the proceeds going to the quilt guild.

At last count we had five vendors scheduled to come to the quilt show. One is Marla Jackson who has written

a new book. Marla is from Lawrence and has become famous for her work in quilting. She has quilts displayed at the Smithsonian Institute.

The festival committee has been busily compiling a history of the festival. Ilene Kimsey has led this effort and the results are outstanding. This year's festival historical display will be revealed the evening of October 7, 5:30 p.m. at the Lumberyard Arts Center.

This year's festival is bringing back some activities that earlier festivals featured. Watch for more information on activities that we haven't seen for a few years. The Maple Leaf Festival has become a major fundraiser for non-profit groups throughout our community. Many, many, many volunteers are needed working in many positions to make this event happen. A huge THANK YOU to all who help in any way to make our festival happen!!!

See you at The Festival!

P.S. Reminder—If you know a veteran who has not received a quilt from Quilts for Baldwin City Veterans or another Quilts of Valor group, please share the veteran's name and contact information with Sharon at Quilters' Paradise.