



Meeting a Challenge

Timeless Stitches – Quilt Capital of Kansas

By Liz Granberg-Jerome

How we meet a challenge, whether in quilting or in any other hobby or activity, is unique to each individual facing that challenge. Have you taken on a challenge in your own life? In the world of quilting, I've taken on several challenges over the last few years, each with a different theme and basic rules. A couple were done as part of a group and others were individual challenges I had to meet on my own. While enjoyable, they could also be stressful.

The first quilting challenges I faced were being chosen to be part of two themed “blog-hops.” In 2013, I was actively blogging about my quilting projects. Madame Samm, a fellow blogger, was sponsoring regular blog-hops where a limited number of participants were invited to take part. Hundreds of people put their name in to be chosen, but only 50 were included in the final group. I was lucky enough to be chosen for two different blog-hops that year. A specific week was chosen for the hop to take place and ten bloggers were featured each day. Those following the blog-hop were invited to visit each blogger's page on their reveal day to see their creation and, at the end of the week, votes for the best project were tallied and recognition given to the winners.

Once you were selected to be part of the blog-hop, you had to create a small quilt based on the theme. The first one was the Hugs & Kisses Blog-Hop that was centered around Valentine's Day. Using a



collection of red and pink fabrics I'd been collecting, I created a patchwork heart quilted wall hanging that I continue to display every February. The second blog hop was the It's All About Me Blog-Hop held later in the spring. For this challenge, Amy Bradley provided a pattern for the chosen participants to use as the basis for their creations. Some stayed fairly close to the original pattern, but others took the main character and ran with it. My quilted wall hanging was inspired by a trip I'd taken several years before where I danced under a full moon in the woods with friends. Moondance Gal embodies that night for me including the moon and stars in her eyes.

These two challenges were quite fun. Yes, there were deadlines, but I went into them knowing what I had to do and how I was going to accomplish it. Plus, these were both for small projects—wall hangings that could easily be made in a few days. I took photos of each step and narrated the process

on my blog posts for those visiting my blog to read. Making the posts entertaining was part of the fun—creating the quilts and telling their stories. <https://gypsydreamerquilts.blogspot.com/2013/02/hugs-and-kisses-blog-hop-day-5.html>

Other challenges I've faced were making quilts as samples for major fabric companies. My first commercial sample was in 2016 when I was invited to make a quilt for Paintbrush Studio Fabrics that would hang in their booth at the spring Quilt Market. Five commercial samples were made for Timeless Treasures Fabrics from 2017 to 2021. Several of these quilts also went to the annual spring Quilt Market events and had limited time between receipt of the fabrics and the date they had to be completed and delivered. With limited time given for each one, the design, creation, and quilting processes were all rushed. Each deadline was met, but there definitely was more stress involved.

The most recent challenge has been to select something that reminds me of Kansas City—fountains, iconic buildings, sports teams, etc.—and create an 80"x80" quilt to be included in the upcoming Kansas City Regional Quilt Festival. I had an idea and purchased the fabric months ago. Then life happened with medical challenges in my family and the quilt project got set aside. As the festival approached and time was growing short, I notified the committee I would not be able to complete it. I immediately heard from committee members who encouraged me to still try to get it done. After learning of others who were trying hard to meet the deadline but were facing life challenges of their own and had dropped out, I reversed my decision and signed back up. Talk about stress! By the time this is printed, my quilt will be hanging at the KCRQF at the Overland Park Convention Center. The first cut, once I decided to go for it, was made on June 3. The last stitches went in Monday, June 12, just hours before I turned it in. Thank goodness my concept had large pieces and simple modern quilting!



Hopefully next time I take on a challenge, I won't wait to the last minute. No more second guessing myself whether I can do it or not. Challenge yourself to take part and create something unique. Step up and prove to yourself that you truly can do it. Today I can look back and see the samples I made. Several of them have been selected to be published in quilting books, which not many people can say. I'm proud of the way I've used my quilting skills to inspire others and hope to continue as I meet new and different challenges along the way.