



## Shop Hops are Coming!

Timeless Stitches — Quilt Capital of Kansas

Sharon Vesecky



A quilter knows spring has arrived when the shop hops start! A quilt shop hop is a shopping event that several quilt shops sponsor together. These events provide an opportunity for quilters to see new fabric and quilting tools. Many times shops will demonstrate the use of a particular tool, so the event becomes a learning experience.

The usual format is for customers visit each shop and get a “passport” stamped. They then submit their completed passports to be placed in a drawing for prizes. Sometimes a shop hop follows a certain theme or has exclusive fabrics or patterns. Last year the Ad Astra Quilt Shop Hop (all shops are in northeast Kansas) had an exclusive fabric. This year the shops each featured quilts that represented the types of fabrics and patterns popular in each individual shop.

The All Kansas & Nebraska Shop Hop started April 1 and continues through May 31. This extended shop hop invites quilters to visit any or all of the 79 shops across two states and subdivided into six regions. It has an exclusive line of over a dozen prairie themed fabrics that each participating shop used to make sample quilts and other items. The fabric line is built around a panel that depicts symbols of those two states— meadowlarks, sunflowers, cottonwood trees, goldenrod, bison, white-tailed deer, and honeybees. The shops display their samples made from those fabrics throughout the two-month hop. Each visitor receives a square of fabric printed with a “saying” when they visit the shops. Each square is unique to that shop. Quilters’ Paradise chose for their square of fabric, “I just had an out of bobbin experience. It left me stitchless.” Some shops included these squares in their sample projects.

Many quilters are also gardeners, so late spring and summer become a combination of those activities. In the fall you’ll notice the season of quilt shows. Of course, there are some spring and summer quilt shows, but the largest concentration of them seems to be in the fall. It is a good time to show what has been completed the rest of the year. Our own Maple Leaf Quilt Show takes place during the Maple Leaf Festival the third weekend of October. The Maple Leaf Quilt Guild produces the show. Their members and other people in the community and often from across Kansas proudly display over 100 quilts each year.

As we move into late fall and winter, you will find quilters everywhere working hard to complete quilts to be used to decorate for Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas, as well as gifts for Christmas or other holidays. As the days grow colder and the evenings grow longer, there is plenty of time to quilt! And then the cycle begins again as quilters look forward to the spring shop hops as winter breaks. Whether hopping alone or in a car full of quilters, a great time is had by all!