

Newsletters in July 2012

California fun

July 18, 2012

Greetings everyone,

I hope that you are making time to get into the creative zone with quilting, gardening, or other creative projects this summer. We know how important it is to find time to reduce the stress in our lives. Please remember to take care of yourselves along with all the other people in your lives.

I just got home from a wonderful teaching trip to California. Those **Country Crossroads Quilters in Modesto** are a bundle of enthusiastic energy even when it is 100 degrees out. They probably were all freezing when I begged them to crank up the AC so that i did not look like I had just been swimming. What a friendly bunch of talented ladies.

From there we went on to Yosemite for our two day break between the Modesto and Napa workshops.

These are pictures of trees in Yosemite. It's lovely to remember that Mother Nature is quite creative and often playful. Our quilts are more interesting when we dare to add elements of emotion, unexpected embellishments, shapes, or color to our own work too.



We stopped by to enjoy a nice afternoon with one of my students from Asilomar on our way to Napa. Her house was full of quilts, including a beautiful surprise wedding quilt for her daughter. One of the best parts of this job is meeting new friends that I might never have had in my life without the quilting community.

Fortunately, the weather cooled to in the 80's when we got to Napa. Every teacher in the country would want to come to the **Napa Valley Quilters** if they knew that they hosted you in a quest house in the middle of a vineyard! This guild gives a \$500 art scholarship every year to a local

high school student. They do a great job of passing on their love of creativity and are very warm and welcoming. We had an 8 year old in the show and tell line up with her quilt at guild meeting too. These are the two quilt patterns that I made just for these guilds. Alpine Glow and The Vineyard.



I always encourage my students to make these patterns their own. Change the colors, change the winery building to your favorite place, change the river to a meadow. My patterns can be a jumping off point to your own unique vision!

Road to California Classes are open for registration now. I will be teaching a two day landscape workshop. You can work from your own photograph or from one of my patterns. Send me photos that you are considering and we can e chat about the suitability and possible fabrics. Friday will be the new Dancing Crane pattern for confident beginner applicator's. Friday at noon I will be doing a lecture about Creativity and Sat I will have a workshop on making Dimensional Embellishments With Thread and Synthetics. Road allows 25 students and there are only 4-5 places left in each workshop. So sign up now!

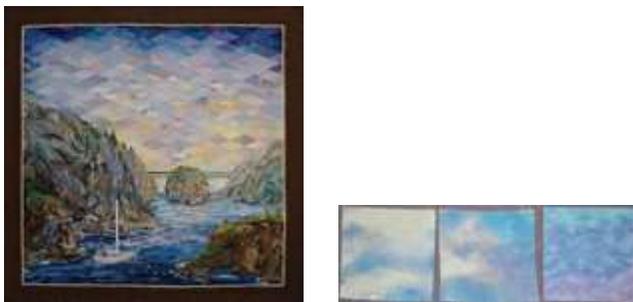
New workshop: Christmas Cardinals. [click her for PDF](#)

This is the center panel of my Audubon's Christmas. I have three of the panel patterns done. All 7 should be done and on my website by Oct, maybe earlier. I will keep you posted.

Monthly Tip.

Combining piecing with applique is one of the best ways to boost interest in your quilt. The contrast of geometrical shapes with organic applique shapes, catches our eyes right away and encourages more exploration by viewers.

Skies are a great place to add pieced elements to pictorial work.



I use both squares and diamonds for my pieced skies. Choose multiple prints that, when placed together, blend and have soft transitions from one color to the next. Sometimes I use my paints to bring color over from one square to the next, so that they will run together even better. Strip piece your geometric shapes together. Every other strip should have the seams ironed down in the opposite direction, so that where 4 shapes meet, the seams are not too bulky. Avoid sewing the strips together from one side to the other. They will stretch as you continue to iron and cause you problems. Instead sew two strips together; then 4 strips together; then add another 4 strips to either side. This will keep the sky section laying flatter in the end. If you have a colorful sky, consider over-dying /painting some of those reflected colors into your water or hills with your paints. *On Point?* Any time you create diagonal lines within a composition it will automatically add movement. Our eyes like to track across those visual lines.

I am looking forward to next month when I host a 4 day workshop in my home studio. It's a very small class with lots of returning students and friends. Have a wonderful summer everyone.

Hugs Kathy