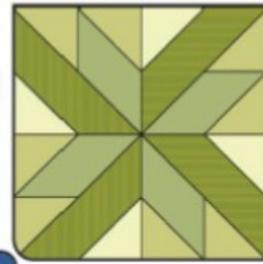


# SCRAP CHAT



February

The Newsletter of The Bed-warmer Quilt & Sew

2020

## Sew New

### Latest Shop Updates

#### Bee Crazy Sewing Bee

Monday Feb 3, 10-2

Monday Mar 2, 10-2

#### Embroidery of the Month

Tuesday Mar 10, 10-2

Saturday Mar 21, 10-2

Receive Kit, Step-by-Step  
Instructions & Design File

#### Block of the Month

Wed Feb 19, All day

(BOM will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed)

#### Hearthside Quilt

Saturday Feb 22, All day

#### Jelly Roll Rug

Tues Feb 25, All day

#### Flags Wavin'

Friday Feb 28, All day

#### Edge to Edge Quilting with Embroidery

Saturday Feb 29, All day

#### Piece-full Clubhouse

Tuesday Mar 3, All day

Bring UFO's and snacks

#### Turning Twenty Quilt

Saturday Mar 14, All Day

## Shellie's Stash



## WE ARE CHANGING THINGS UP!!

This is so exciting and I think you're gonna love it!

Many of our wonderful customers have expressed that they wish they didn't have to wait for the rest of the story that we include in our newsletters. Well----**the WAIT is OVER!!**

We are changing up the newsletter so that you can receive the entire story in one episode!

Up until this time we have published 4 stories a year, spreading out each story over 3 months. We are still going to publish 4 stories a year giving

you the entire story once a quarter. This month we will publish the last two sections of the current story and then in APRIL we will publish the next complete story.

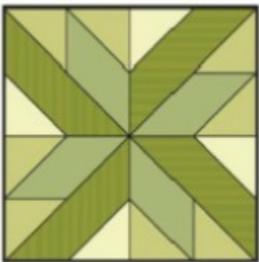
The CHANGE--

On the first of the month we will send out an email with the classes for the month and any important information on up coming events. Then once a quarter we will send out the whole newsletter filled with all the great stuff you love including a full story. You will still have access to the list of classes on the website and as always each months "newsletter" will be published on our web site in case you miss our email.

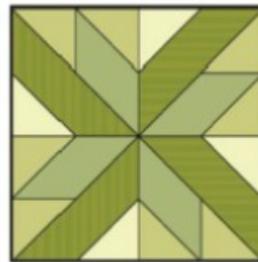
We are looking forward to this and know that you will too.

We sure appreciate all of you and love spending time with you doing what we love!

- Shellie Blake



# SCRAP CHAT



Social Circle We love to see all the things that our creative customers are working on and making. So, we are adding a special day to our calendar to allow y'all to come to our Piece-Full Clubhouse and bring your UFO's and work on them. Show and tell always makes us happy and we can bring snacks and socialize together. Watch for the dates. Our first Social in the Clubhouse will be Tuesday March 3. See y'all then!!

## Snippets

Wool Pressing mats are WONDERFUL! If you have never tried a wool pressing mat I highly recommend that you do. The wool will radiate the heat back to your project instead of absorbing it, so when you press your blocks on the wool mat, the heat comes back into your block on the back-side. One pressing and your block will be flat and pressed. The mat is washable to get out any extra best press or starch. You wash it in the bath tube and lay on towels to dry. They come in a variety of sizes for use at home or to travel with you. Perfect pressing any time! *Voilà!*

## Spotlight

## Customer Focus

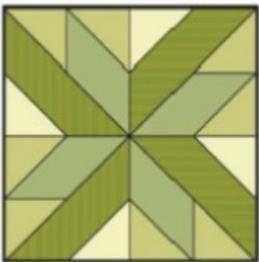
### Barbara McLaughlin

**B**arbara McLaughlin was born in Franklin Indiana at Camp Addabery, where her dad was stationed with the army. She is the oldest of 10 children and has 5 brothers and 4 sisters. When she was 6 months old they moved to Colorado where her mother's family lived. She did all her schooling in Colorado. She married when she was 16 and her hubby was 17. They lived in Arvado, CO and had 2 girls. She worked for a company called Doall, which makes industrial tools. She was the office manager for 29 ½ years. She did all shipping, receiving, customer relations and collections. When they closed the

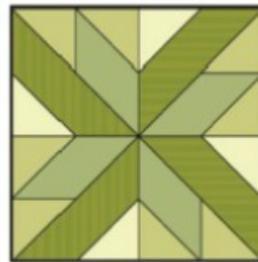
office in Colorado she was forced to retire.

After 37 years of marriage her hubby passed away. She then met Jim- her current hubby, online, and they were married in 2008. Both of her girls are married and she has 3 grand kids, 1 girl and 2 boys. Jim has 2 girls also and has 7 grandsons and 1 great granddaughter. Barbara and Jim moved to Arkansas in 2015 because her dad was from Arkansas and his side of the family is still here.

Barbara learned to sew when she was 8 years old on her family's treadle machine. She was making clothes for her and her family by the time she was in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. She says that her biggest failure with sewing was when she made a bathing suit for her sister. She used the wrong kind of fabric and when her sister got in the water the fabric swelled up and



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the suit fell off her. Luckily, her sister was only 8 years old.

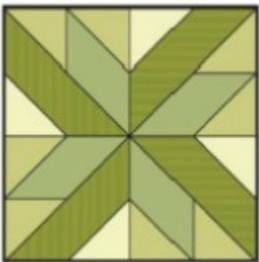
Barbara made her own wedding dress and wedding dresses for both her daughters. She was able to use the dresses from her daughters to make a wedding dress for her granddaughter. She has made clothes for her daughters and granddaughter including lots of prom dresses and dance costumes. Her granddaughter's favorites are 4 hooded long capes. They all give her a list of

things they want her to make them. She has done alterations for years and especially loves the prom and wedding dresses.

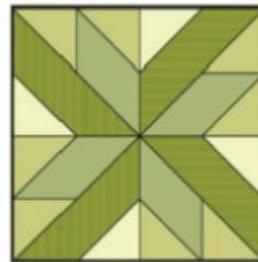
Barbara loves to be creative and has made special animals for her daughters from their dad's clothes. She loves sewing and started quilting about 2 years ago and has enjoyed joining in with us. She also loves cleaning and organizing her house and sewing room. She says she has the unique ability to

find any hole and step in it, every time. Her hubby had been working in the yard and had made several holes. She asked him to cover them and yet she fell in the ONE that didn't get covered. She LOVES holes, apparently!





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## Story Corner

### Conrad's Visitor

#### Parts 2 and 3 of 3

Written by Darren Blake

The man nodded and stood, taking a step back while looking over the exterior of the church. "No idea when somebody will be here, huh? Well, I guess I'll just have to keep walking until I find a church with somebody at home." He looked at Conrad and shook his head while forcing a sheepish smile. "I had a duffle bag with a few things in it, but stupidly set it down when I went into Walmart to use the bathroom. It was gone when I got back. I really didn't think anyone would find it worth stealing. Now I'm just hoping to find somebody who can donate a few old clothes to a good cause."

The stranger seemed to be full of surprises. First, he appeared almost out of nowhere, then it seemed Rowdy liked him immediately, and now he was looking for something other than money. A sudden thought struck Conrad. "You hungry?"

The man smiled, and despite several missing teeth, it was a warm and engaging smile. "I could use something to eat, sure. You offering?"

Conrad met his smile and stood. "I am. There's a taco truck just down by the Jiffy Lube. You like Mexican?"

"Yes sir, that sounds really good. I appreciate your generosity. By the way, my name is Gabe Himell."

"Conrad Wellborn. Nice to meet you Gabe. Short for Gabriel?"

"Yes sir. But Gabe is all anybody ever calls me."

With Rowdy in his arms, Conrad was unable to shake hands, but the sentiment was there. They turned and set off down the street. After just a few steps, Conrad felt the silence start to become awkward, so he decided to engage his new acquaintance in conversation. "Are you from this area?"

"No sir. I'm from Texas originally. I've just been bumping around different states for a while now. Looks like I'll be heading to Virginia though. An old friend got word to me that there's an opening at his landscaping business and offered to hire me on. I figured it's about time to quit living on the street and become respectable again."

"Again?" Conrad asked.

Gabe chuckled, but it wasn't a happy sound. "Yeah. I come from good roots, but I sort of fell off the rails, you might say. You don't want to hear about all that though, I'm sure."

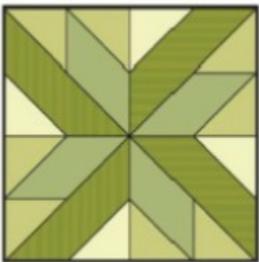
"Actually, I'm interested," Conrad responded. "I'd be glad to hear your story if you don't mind sharing."

Gabe paused as if considering the request. "I guess I don't mind telling

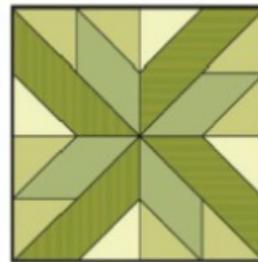
you if you don't mind listening. You wouldn't know it to look at me now, but once upon a time I was quite an athlete. I played football and was a state champion wrestler. Yes sir, those were the days. Right out of high school, I joined the Marines. Figured I'd spend some time there, then use the GI Bill to get a college education, and then maybe go back as an officer. Did real well, too, until my second tour over in the Sandbox. Didn't figure I was a guy who could be broken emotionally, but the things I saw in Iraq scarred me but good. By the time I finished my second enlistment, I was in and out of VA hospitals with what they called a severe case of PTSD. I never got into drugs or alcohol like so many of my comrades, though. Wandering and living on the streets became my version of self-medication. It might surprise you to know how many really good people there are in the world. Just when I'd get to a point where I'd find myself destitute, hungry, or cold, somebody always managed to step in and help me out. Just like you're doing now."

"But you think you're done with wandering now?" Conrad prompted.

"Yes sir, I believe so. It's been a few years now since I left the Corps, and little by little the things that used



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to torture me have slipped into the background. I didn't accept my friend's offer of work until I was sure I was ready to make a change. I'm ready now."

They arrived at the taco truck and Conrad stepped up to order a loaded burrito. Then he nodded to Gabe in a way that let the man know he was free to order anything and as much as he wanted. Gabe ordered three loaded burritos. They sat at one of the available picnic tables to await their food as Gabe took another long look at Rowdy. "Hope you don't mind me asking," he said, "but the little feller doesn't look too good."

It took several long seconds before Conrad could compose himself sufficiently to answer without his voice cracking. "Yes, my little friend here has some health issues."

Gabe looked empathetic. "I'm sorry. Have you had him long?"

"Just over four years." Conrad paused again. "My wife and I got him only a short time before she passed. Since that time, I guess you could call him my version of self-medication."

The gentle quip served to lighten the mood and their talk turned to other topics. They had finished talking about the weather and landscaping when their burritos were ready. Conrad enjoyed the sight of Gabe finishing off all three of the large servings. He knew the man had been hungry, but as thin as he was, where did Gabe put that much food? Conrad hadn't even been able to finish the single burrito he had ordered. "So where do you go now?" Conrad asked.

Gabe looked thoughtful for a moment. "I still need to round up some clothes. Once I get that done, I'll probably try to beg a little cash and find a laundromat." He looked down at his filthy clothes. "Or maybe I'll just trash these. They might be beyond saving at this point."

A thought occurred to Conrad and he found himself speaking before he had a moment to mull over the consequences. "Tell you what, I've got some clothes I think will fit you, although I guess I might need to give you a belt as well just to be sure. You want to come and take a look?"

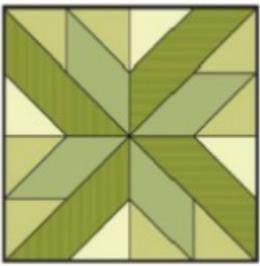
Gabe gave a slightly rueful smile. "You sure? You've already been awfully generous to me. But if you're serious, I would be really grateful."

Well, it was out there and Conrad couldn't take it back even if he had wanted to. He picked up Rowdy who had been lying and panting at his feet and invited Gabe to accompany him for the short walk to his house. As they strode along, enduring moments of silence interspersed with vague conversation, Conrad asked himself what would make him take a stranger home. It was not something he would have ever considered before. It was foolhardy, if not downright dangerous. Maybe it was the fact that Rowdy seemed to trust him. Dogs had a good sense and perception of people. Or maybe it was because engaging in someone else's problems gave him the opportunity to delay the confrontation of his own problem, the one that was struggling for breath as he was carried along. Regardless, it somehow felt

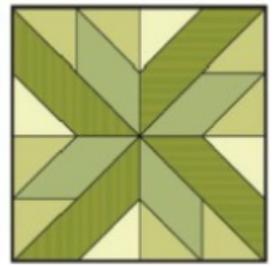
good to have control over at least some of his environment. He couldn't save Rowdy, but he could help this man.

Arriving at his home, Conrad unlocked the door, entered, and invited Gabe to be seated at the kitchen table while he looked through the clothes closet in his bedroom. Setting Rowdy on the bed, Conrad began to sift through the various denim trousers that still hung there. Most of them had fit him years ago, but now were far too narrow-waisted. "Must have washed them in hot water and dried them on high," he chuckled to himself. He looked them over. Yes, they would almost certainly fit his guest so long as he wore a belt to make sure they stayed up. He looked through his shirts to see which ones would be most suitable. There were some that were fairly worn and some that had a little paint on them from various room-painting projects in the house, but he determined not to select those. You don't make a gift of your throwaway things. You give quality materials. He picked five newer shirts: three polos and two button-ups. Those looked good. Out of habit he opened his underwear drawer, shook his head, and closed it again. "Naw, that's just condescending. I'll give him money for underwear and socks," he whispered to himself.

Returning to the kitchen, Conrad set the armload of clothes on the table. He noticed that Gabe had opened the Bible he kept there and had been reading. "Know the scriptures?" he asked his guest.



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“Oh yes,” Gabe responded. “Of all books, this is by far my favorite.”

Conrad sat. This was a conversation that interested him. “Do you have a favorite passage?”

Gabe laughed. “That’s like asking a kid in the candy store what his favorite treat is!” He paused and looked thoughtful for a moment. “But yes, I guess there are a few passages that are sweeter to me, to keep with the metaphor.” He flipped the pages. “First Corinthians, chapter 13.”

“Ah yes,” Conrad nodded. “And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”

“Do you know Hebrews chapter 12 verse 6?”

Conrad squinted in thought. “Nothing comes to mind.”

“For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth,” Gabe said with a smile. “I like that because lately I feel the Lord loveth me a whole lot.” Both men laughed for a moment, and it felt good to Conrad. Gabe closed the Bible and looked at the pile of clothes on the table. “I have to say it again. You are more than generous with me. Thank you so much! I guess I should make sure they fit, huh?”

Conrad looked at Gabe for a long moment. Well, he had trusted Rowdy’s people sense and his own conscience thus far. In for a penny, in for a pound, as they say. “Gabe, look, it’s already late afternoon. Why don’t you just plan to stay in my guest room tonight? It’s got a separate bathroom and you can shower and make a completely fresh

start tomorrow after a good night’s rest. Sound okay?”

Gabe nodded and smiled. “Once again, you are being more than generous. Thank you for everything.”

Conrad stood and motioned toward Gabe. “Follow me this way. I’ll show you the guest room.”

They walked together down the hallway and entered a door on the right. Conrad flipped on the light and Gabe entered and looked around. Suddenly his eyes lit up. “Whoa! What are all these?”

There were a series of curio cabinets, small tables and shelves in the room. Each of them seemed loaded with quilts of various colors and designs. Conrad looked around. “My wife Clara was a dedicated quilter. Her greatest joy was making quilts. As you can see, I still have almost all of the quilts she ever made. I imagine that if we had ever had children, many of these would have been given to them, and maybe their children after them. As it is, I’ve still got them all.”

Gabe picked one up and unfolded it. “Wow. Not that I know much about quilting, but these look like absolute heirlooms.” He paused a moment and looked at Conrad. “I don’t mean to offend, but what happens to all of these when you depart this world?”

Conrad pondered a minute. “Yeah, I don’t really know. To be honest, I haven’t thought about it all that much. I tend to hold on to things, even if they might better be used somewhere else. Those pants I gave you for example. I should have given

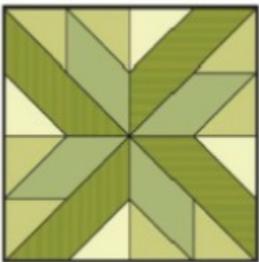
those to Goodwill years ago, because there is no way on earth I would ever fit into them again. Yet, I hung on to them the same way I hang on to these quilts. I guess it’s my way of preserving part of my past that I love.”

Gabe folded the quilt he was holding and picked up another and then another, examining each of them with a sense of wonder and awe. “These are truly wonderful,” he said at last. “Conrad, do you mind if I offer you a suggestion?”

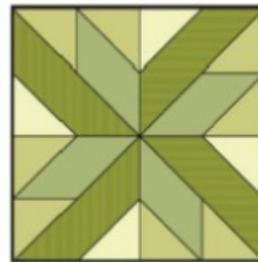
“Not at all. Fire away.”

“There is a program in Little Rock called ‘Family Fresh Start.’ I have run across it in my travels. It is a program that helps families transition from homelessness to a stable home environment. Sometimes it is a single parent with children, sometimes both parents with children, but there are always kids involved. It’s administered by a central church, but churches from all over the greater Little Rock area help out with it. I mention it because I know they are always looking for good quality blankets or quilts. The church people use them in the family sleeping quarters, but often the children get attached to the comfort of a quilt and the people at Family Fresh Start allow the child to take it along for emotional comfort when they leave. From what I see here, you could supply them for months.”

Conrad picked up one of the quilts and unfolded a corner. “Clara put a label on the back of each of these indicating that she was the



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maker of the quilt,” he said. “Would they still accept them, do you think?”

“I think that makes it even better,” Gabe responded. “It adds a personal touch and those who come through the Family Fresh Start would know that the quilt was made with quality and love. I think it’s a way that you could make Clara’s legacy carry on for generations.” He paused for a moment as if trying to remember something. “In the book of Ecclesiastes, it says ‘Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.’ It is a strange idiom, I know. In today’s language, we might say ‘What comes around, goes around.’ I just think that you and your late wife have the opportunity to make a wonderful impact on the lives of many people. I’m not trying to push you into anything and I wouldn’t blame you for keeping the quilts in your possession in remembrance of your sweetheart. It’s just an idea.”

“No, I like the idea that Clara’s legacy can carry on. Have you got the address for this place?”

“I’ll write it down for you.”

Later that night, Conrad lay in bed thinking about the events of the day. Rowdy was lying next to him; the animal’s breathing was labored and heavy. Clara never allowed Rowdy in the bed with them when she was alive, but now that’s the only place he ever slept at night. Conrad felt he needed to be near to his best friend, just in case. His thoughts turned to Gabe and all that he had said. The astonishment and bewilderment that he had invited a stranger to occupy his guest room had worn off, and now he merely

considered Gabe’s suggestion that he donate Clara’s quilts. He knew that if he were to die before putting them to good use, they would probably be disposed of in an estate sale, or worse. Yet, it was hard to let go of anything that had been so much a part of Clara. The tug of war continued in his mind for much of the night, but by morning, he knew what should be done.

Conrad was in the kitchen pouring some cold cereal into a bowl when Gabe entered just as the clock hit 8:00 a.m. He looked like an entirely new man with clean clothes, clean hair, and a shave. The clothes seemed to fit pretty well, too. That was good. The two men talked while eating and even for a while afterward. As Gabe was preparing to leave, Conrad disappeared into his bedroom for a moment and then reappeared with a rucksack in his hands. “You mentioned your duffle bag was taken. I think your clothes will all fit in here. Better than carrying your stuff around in a plastic bag, right?”

Gabe smiled. “Right. And thank you again. God bless you for your generosity and hospitality.” He paused for a moment and looked at Conrad. “Did you decide on my suggestion for Family Fresh Start?”

“I did. Leave me the name and address, if you would.”

Gabe wrote on a piece of paper, shook Conrad’s hand, and prepared to leave. “Oh, one more thing,” Conrad said. He handed two twenty-dollar bills to his visitor. “I’d give you more if I could, but this is all I have.” Gabe gratefully tucked the money in his

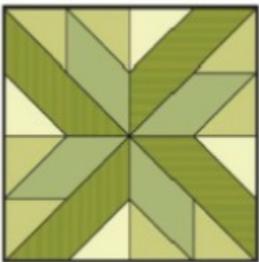
pocket, bid his host farewell again, and walked out the front door.

Rowdy lay on the floor, watching out of the top of his eyes as his master began carefully placing the folded quilts into large bags to transport them to the church where Family Fresh Start was headquartered. Conrad would worry about changing the sheets in the guest room and cleaning up later. For now, this was the activity that gave him purpose to his day and allowed him to further delay any decisions concerning his little dog.

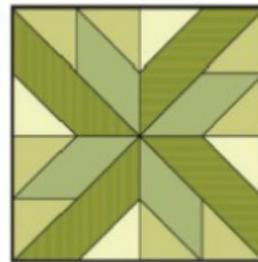
The three ladies at the First Baptist Church were elated when they saw the quilts that Conrad had brought for donation. They continually thanked him and admired the wonderful workmanship of the comforters. They also promised that they would assure that each and every quilt would be used with care, and that the families coming through the program would be blessed abundantly by this donation.

Arriving back at home, Conrad was met with a sight he hadn’t seen in weeks. Rowdy met him at the door, standing on his paws, tail wagging. The little fellow had not had energy to do that for a long time. Conrad picked him up, walked into the family room to sit on the sofa, and stroked the head of his canine friend. Rowdy reached up to lick Conrad’s face, and the man began to wonder if Rowdy was making his last stand.

The next morning, when Rowdy stood up on Conrad’s bed and then jumped off, Conrad decided that it was time to go back to the vet. This energetic behavior was unusual, to say the least. Doctor Griffith examined and tested Rowdy in all the same ways he



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had done previously. Coming back into the room where Conrad was waiting and Rowdy was sniffing the furniture, the floor, and anything else that might have an interesting scent attached to it, Doctor Griffith was shaking his head. "I think you've got a bona fide miracle on your hands, Conrad," Doctor Griffith declared. "Dogs don't recover from the malady that Rowdy has. They always die. Yet I'm finding no indication of thickening of the heart valves. I listened to his heart half a dozen different ways and each time he came back clean. There's no explaining it."

There really was no way to explain it. A couple of days ago, Conrad was trying to figure out when to euthanize Rowdy. Now it seemed the dog was back to full health. Maybe it really was true about "Cast thy bread upon the waters," but Conrad didn't actually think that this was what the passage meant. It was a mystery, but a heartwarming mystery. Arriving back

at home after receiving the miraculous news from the veterinarian, Conrad bent down to rub Rowdy's ears. "C'mon boy. Let's go clean up the guestroom." Gabe had placed his old unsalvageable clothes in a plastic bag that Conrad had given him, which Conrad now took out to the garbage. Then he cleaned and mopped the rest of the bathroom while Rowdy sat and watched, his tail wagging periodically. Conrad didn't know when or if he might have a visitor, but it was a good practice to keep things clean and in order just in case.

Moving out into the bedroom, he began to strip the sheets when he noticed an open Bible sitting on the nightstand. Gabe must have continued reading for a while after he came to bed. Conrad sat down on the bed and picked up the Bible as Rowdy jumped up on the mattress and then climbed into his lap. He wondered what passages his visitor must have been reading. Conrad noticed a folded

slip of paper sticking up between the pages of the book, which he opened and read:

*Conrad, thank you again for your hospitality and your friendship.*

*-Gabriel*

That was heartwarming but a little strange. Gabe himself had said that everybody only ever called him Gabe. Then he noticed the passage in the Bible where the paper had been placed. It was in the thirteenth chapter of the book of Hebrews. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers," it said, "for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

Conrad held Rowdy and wept as the little dog licked his face.

The End

If you missed Part 1 of the story, check our website at

[www.bedwarmerquiltandsew.com](http://www.bedwarmerquiltandsew.com)

and click on the newsletter for January

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