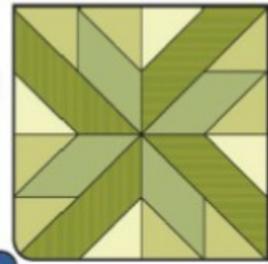


SCRAP CHAT



4th Quarter

The Newsletter of The Bed-warmer Quilt & Sew

2020

Sew New

Latest Shop Updates

Flannel Throw

Saturday Oct 10, All day

Embroidery of the Month

Tuesday Oct 13, 10-2

Saturday, Oct 17, 10-2

(Embroidery of the Month is usually the 2nd Tues and 3rd Sat of each month)

Block of the Month (cream)

Wednesday Oct 14, All day

Gnome Quilt

Friday Oct 16, All day

Jelly Roll Stars Quilt

Saturday Oct 24, All day

Embroidery of the Month

Tuesday Nov 9, 10-2

Saturday Nov 21, 10-2

(Embroidery of the Month is usually the 2nd Tues and 3rd Sat of each month)

Pfaff Creative Icon Two Day Event

Friday and Saturday

Nov 13-14, All Day

Shellie's Stash



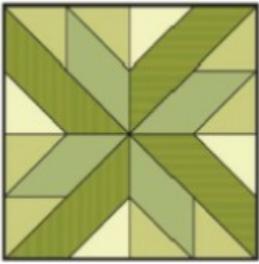
As many of you know, fall is my very favorite season. I love everything about it, the colors, the smells, the weather and most of all the flavors. My favorite pillow has been out since September that says, Pumpkin Spice Everything!! This fall seems particularly exciting. As the season is changing with new colors and temperatures, we have also been able to expand our classes and events.

mystery and excitement. We were able to get together with friends that have done the mystery before and with friends that had joined us for the first time. Everyone had a really great time and enjoyed being able to work together and spend an evening of fun with each other. Lots of the people that attended have already started finishing their quilt and we have posted pictures on our Facebook page @BedwarmerQuiltandSew if you haven't already, go check it out.

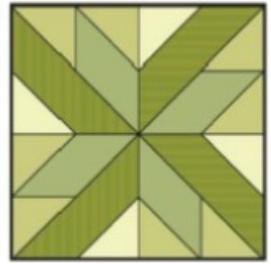
We have lots of fun things happening and events coming up and we are excited as more and more people are able to get out and join us. I love watching the changes in the season and am blessed to be doing what I love. Most of all I love being able to see ALL Y'ALL again!

We were able to reschedule our Night of Mysteries that was set to happen in May. We had two super fun filled nights of

- Shellie Blake



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Social Circle

We have two very fun and exciting events coming up in November. Both are two day events and all are welcome to join us.

Pfaff Creative Icon Event and Kimberbell Exclusive Event

Pfaff Creative Icon Event is for all of those that want to play with a Creative Icon and for all those that own a Creative Icon. Sign up is mandatory so that we have enough space and machines available. You will bring your own machine if you have a Creative Icon. We are hosting Karen Charles for the event and it will be filled with projects, fun and food! Nov 13-14.

Kimberbell Exclusive Event is for anyone that owns an embroidery machine. You will bring your own machine. Kits are included, you will be given a list of threads to bring. Sign up is mandatory for available space and kits. Nov 19-20

Snippets

It's the time of year that we want to wrap up in our cozy quilts. So here are a couple of tips for your next flannel quilt.

*Do Not prewash flannel. Flannel ravels a lot and you can lose an inch or more with shrinkage and ravel. After it is finished you can wash it.

*If your flannel is a loose weave, tighten your stitch length, just a little, to keep the seams from raveling or coming loose during washing.

*Arkansas can still be too warm to want a heavy quilt, so use flannel for the front and the back of your quilt and don't put batting in-between.

*If you feel it is absolutely necessary to have something in-between, use another piece of flannel as your "batting".

*It is best to quilt flannel with an all over pattern to keep it very secure.

You will have a light weight, but super cozy quilt that easily wraps around you or someone special! **Voilà!**

Spotlight

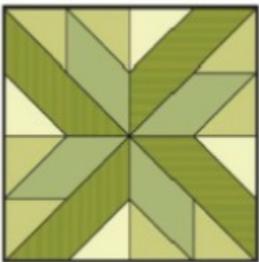
Customer Focus

Dawn Williams

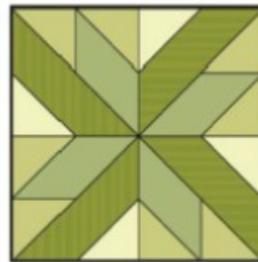
Dawn Williams was born in Portsmouth, Virginia. She is the youngest of three children with an older sister and brother. Her father served in the Navy, so by the time she graduated, she had

lived in 7 different states. She graduated from Pittsburgh High School in Pittsburgh, Kansas. She moved to California with intent to attend college, but worked for a year to save money. Then ended up moving back to Kansas for 2 years and then to Arkansas. While in Arkansas she went to school for office management and learned to do nails. Dawn then took an opportunity to move to Montana for 4 years. She worked in the nail salon during the day and in a Casino at night. She worked the High Rollers table so that she could pay for school to be certified to do nails.

Dawn joined the Army Reserves and moved to Texas during Desert Storm. She worked as a nail tech during the day and bar tended at night. Dawn met Jeff because he was a friend of the guy Dawn was dating. Jeff had just returned home from Desert Storm and had come to the bar with his friend. Jeff was blocking Dawn's tip jar, so she told him if he filled it up, she would take him to breakfast. Jeff got everyone in the bar to give a generous tip. And when her shift finished, she took him to breakfast. Jeff then started dating Dawn's roommate. It wasn't long lived and when they broke up Dawn thought for the first time that Jeff was a pretty great guy. They started dating and 6 months later they were engaged. While they were engaged, Dawn went back to school to get her full cosmetology license so she could also do hair. They got married December 28, 1992. Jeff had full custody of his 9 year old son, so Dawn became a wife and a mother all at once. They moved back to Fayetteville, Arkansas so Jeff could go to college. Dawn worked for 2 different nail salons and after 7 years opened her own



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salon. Jeff reenlisted in the Army Reserve after the towers were attacked on 9/11. In 2006, Jeff was to go to language school in California, so Dawn closed her salon. Right before they were to leave Jeff's orders were changed and he was deployed to Iraq. At that same time Jeff's son, who was now 23, had also enlisted in the Reserves and was sent to Iraq at the same time as Jeff.

After Jeff and Dawn were married they decided to have more kids, but were not successful. So they decided to adopt. Still nothing happened. In October 2003, Dawn was working with one of her elderly clients. A 70 year old woman, who said that her grandchild was pregnant with her 5th baby and wanted Dawn and Jeff to adopt the baby. They met the mother and it was agreed upon. One morning, (their phone wasn't working), and the doorbell rang. A police officer was standing there

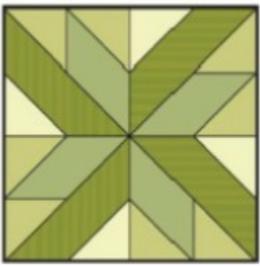
and told them to get to the hospital, the baby was coming. London was born in 2003. London was 3 when Jeff and Daniel were deployed in 2006. When Jeff returned from Iraq in 2007, they moved to California for Jeff to attend language school. After a year they returned to Fayetteville. Dawn home-schooled London from the start until 8th grade. Jeff had gotten involved with politics and ran for office. When he wasn't elected he started working for the Department of Human Services in legislative affairs. So they moved to Little Rock last year.

Dawn started hand sewing when she was 12 when her grandma taught her to cross-stitch and embroider. When she was 14 she decided to make her own clothes and got a pattern and followed the pictures. She didn't know how to read the pattern but her clothes didn't fall apart so she must have done something right. When London

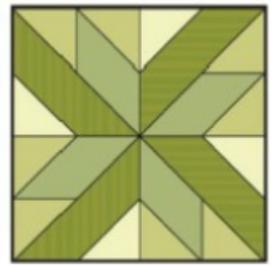
was little Dawn started redesigning her pajamas so that none of the seams, zipper, or snaps touched London's skin. Right before moving to Little Rock, Dawn decided to make a quilt for her nieces wedding and took on a Dresden Plate. She then started making a triangle quilt. She came to our shop to take her first quilt class and learn what she was suppose to be doing. Now she machine quilts and embroiders.

Dawn works for a heat and air company as their office manager and has worked with the Komen Foundation for their race day and other events thru out the year. Dawn also enjoys cooking and baking. Baking is a challenge for her so she works really hard on cookies and cakes because she loves edible art. She is a quick witted, fun-loving lady and always a blast to be around.





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Story Corner

Miriam's Projects

Written by Darren Blake

Miriam walked through the rustic wood and metal barn doors to be greeted by the low buzz of muffled conversations taking place throughout the cavernous room. This was the first time she had ever attended a quilt retreat at the Butterfield Ranch near Jackson Hole, Wyoming and the view outside was spectacular. The venue for the retreat consisted of a large red barn that looked weather-beaten from the outside but was the vision of elegant construction on the inside. The large floor space was coated hardwood that was broken up by a few rough-hewn timbers serving as pillars, and clearly great care had been taken in designing the space with a combination of rustic ranch materials accented with ultra-modern elements. Miriam assumed the barn was often used as a convention hall or dance floor, depending on the needs of the clientele.

Arranged around the floor were long, ten-foot tables placed back-to-back where four quilters at a time had room to set their machines and materials. In all, ninety-six quilters could be accommodated for the current retreat. Power strips had been run to each set of tables and additional ironing and cutting tables had been set up for attendees' convenience. The center of the barn reached all the way to the roof

with its exposed rafters, creating the feeling of a great auditorium. At each end of the barn were stairs that led up to a second-story open hallway and rooms located above the main floor along the outside walls, which printed signs indicated were the "lofts" and where apparently the quilt workshops were to be held. The timbers serving as pillars stood as the support for the lofts.

A woman in jeans, a green silk shirt, and denim jacket approached Miriam and held out her hand. "Good morning," she greeted. "I'm Jackie Anderson, one of the organizers of the quilt retreat."

Miriam smiled and took her hand. "Good morning Jackie. I'm Miriam Walker."

"Miriam!" Jackie responded, "it's so good to meet you in person. I know we've talked on the phone a few times, but it's good to put a face to the voice. How was your trip in from...Arkansas...isn't it?"

"Yes, just outside of Little Rock. I'll bet I've come farther than any of your other attendees, right?"

Jackie laughed. "You might be surprised. Most of the ladies and the couple of gentlemen who will attend are relatively local, but this event tends to attract dedicated quilters from far

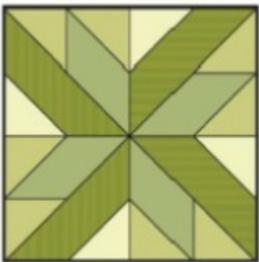
and wide. I know we've got a group from Arizona, another from Pennsylvania, as well as some individuals from places like North Carolina and California." Jackie briefly looked over Miriam's shoulder. "You came alone, right? You're not with a group?"

"Nope. Just me."

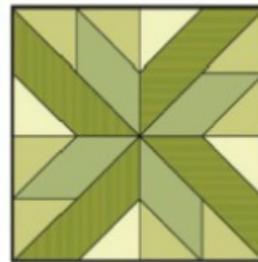
Jackie linked arms with Miriam and began walking her deeper into the barn. "I recommend that you select a seat at a table with three others who are also not part of a group. Do you see an area you prefer over another?"

Miriam looked again around the spacious floor and the many tables set up on it. The lighting seemed very good no matter where she located, but she didn't care to be too close to the bathrooms or stairways. "How about over there?" she asked, pointing.

They walked over to a set of tables where some quilting materials had already been set, indicating that one quilter had already claimed the spot. "This should do nicely," Jackie observed. "Let's see, I believe these things belong to Sharon, who is also here by herself. You'll love her. She's up from Idaho Falls and has been to several of our retreats in the past. A very skilled quilter, I have to say. And one of the nicest people you will ever



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meet. Do you have your machine and materials here? We can set them down to make sure nobody else tries to claim your spot. I try to help arrange these things, but sometimes our attendees get very territorial so it's best to set up your machine or leave some things to indicate the space is taken."

"Actually," Miriam said, "I left them in my cabin. I wasn't sure what the protocol was for setting up, so I took everything there first."

Jackie looked over at a young man standing near a stairway. "Wayne! Wayne! Come here for a second, will you?" The young man hastily made his way to the two women. "Wayne, this is Miss Walker. Will you go with her and help her bring her machine and any other baggage she needs here from her cabin? Thank you." As Wayne nodded his compliance, Jackie turned to Miriam. "Have Wayne carry anything heavy. He can make more than one trip if needed. Our brief opening ceremony to kick off the retreat will be at 7:00 p.m. After that, everybody can settle in and begin working on projects. If you have signed up for any workshops, those begin tomorrow and continue throughout the retreat. We'll give a full briefing on all activities and meals at the opening tonight and you'll have a printed itinerary to refer to. It was wonderful to meet you Miriam. We'll talk some more." With that, Jackie hurried off to assist a couple of new attendees who had just made their way through the barn doors.

"Miss Walker, which cabin are you in?" asked Wayne.

"Number seven," she replied.

As they walked in silence toward her cabin, Miriam marveled at the beauty of this area. The Butterfield Ranch was located in the middle of a high-mountain valley bordered by mountains on all sides, with the Grand Tetons just to the north and west of their location. The valley itself was comprised mostly of wild pasture land with a few fields of alfalfa thrown in that ranchers would ultimately use as their store of winter hay. On her ride from the small Jackson Hole airport where her commuter flight from Salt Lake City had deposited her, Miriam had seen a herd of bison. She had not been clear on whether these were free-ranging beasts or if they were confined to a pasture. The Butterfield Ranch itself was adorned with a series of split-rail fences that served more as a decorative embellishment rather than as an actual barrier. On the property were twenty-two individual log cabins to house the visitors and attendees at events held there. Although Miriam had an entire cabin to herself, it was clear that each cabin was designed to accommodate up to six visitors. The cabins were not large, but comfortably held a kitchen, a bathroom with shower, and even a modified potbellied stove that was fully functional. There were also six bunk beds that used half of the free space, with a small living area filled with two sofas along with a dining table and six chairs. Miriam had been absolutely charmed by the setup and wished that her husband Tony had accompanied her, even if he did not share in her passion. While she was working on projects, he could have gone out riding horses, sightseeing, or

walking the streets and shops of Jackson Hole. Late June in this valley was certainly a place of inspiration and delight!

"Miss Walker," Wayne said as they entered her cabin, "what would you like me to carry back to the barn?"

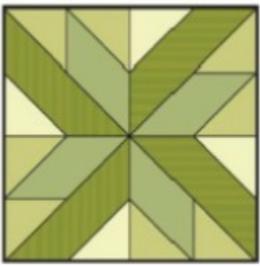
Miriam pointed to her case containing her sewing machine along with a separate bag that held her extension table, fabrics, and various rulers and notions she needed. "If you can take those, I would be very appreciative," she said. Miss Jackie knows where I want to sit, so if you'll have her point that out to you, you can set them there. I'll be along in a few minutes to finish setting up."

Wayne grinned. "Yes ma'am. By the way, Miss Jackie is my mom. You notice how she orders me around..."

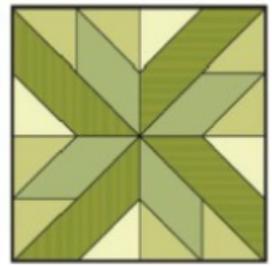
Miriam laughed at the good nature of the young man. "Now that you mention it, I guess I can see a little of her in you." She paused for a moment. "Wayne, thank you again for taking my machine and materials back there. Just use the wheels on the machine case and it should make moving them easier."

"Yes, ma'am."

The clock on the wall had just reached 7:00 when Jackie Anderson stood at the head of the room with a microphone in her hand. "Welcome," she began, "to the Butterfield Ranch Quilt and Sewing Retreat. I'm Jackie Anderson and I am one of the organizers of our event. All involved hope you have a wonderful experience over the next five days." She went on to explain how meals would be arranged, details concerning the



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workshops, and that the barn venue would remain open day and night for the duration. “Finally,” Jackie continued, “many of you here have come with groups and know everyone at your table, but others are here without a group and have not had the chance to meet your tablemates. Please take time now to introduce yourselves and get to know the people you’ll be sitting and working next to for the next five days.”

All four individuals looked with nervous smiles around the table where Miriam sat until she said “Who wants to begin?”

A woman who appeared to be in her late thirties spoke up. “I guess I can go first. My name is Sabrina Carlton. I’m married, have two kids, a boy and a girl, and I live in Fresno, California. This is the first time I have attended this retreat, but I have been looking forward to it since I signed up in February. My husband, Kent, is here with me, and my kids are staying with my parents in Elko, Nevada. I brought three unfinished projects along in hopes of finally getting them all done by the end of the retreat. They’re all kind of complicated patterns...at least they are for me...and maybe some of you can share some tricks and hints on the things you do to make putting these together easier.” Sabrina paused for a moment. “I have only been quilting for about three years, so I realize I still have a lot to learn. That’s also one of the reasons I decided to come on this retreat.”

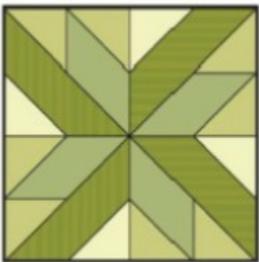
A woman who was probably in her late fifties or early sixties spoke up next. “Hi everyone. My name is Sharon Peterson. I live in Idaho Falls, which is just a hop, skip, and a jump from here.

I actually know Jackie Anderson really well and have attended every one of the retreats she has organized at the Ranch for the last ten years or so. I also have a couple of projects I hope to finish this time around, but I’m also attending several of the workshops. I guess I won’t be surprised if I come away from here having started two or three new quilts that I’ll have to finish over the next couple of months.” Sharon laughed at herself a little. “But anyway, what else can I tell you? Let’s see, I’m widowed, have four children, all of whom live in other states, and I have nine grandchildren.”

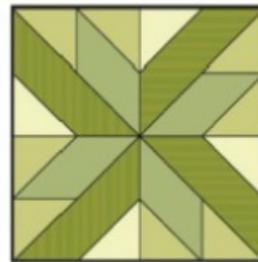
When it was clear that Sharon had finished her introduction, a woman in her mid-forties decided to speak. “Hi everybody. So, my name is Sophia Massard. This is my third time coming to The Butterfield Ranch for a retreat. I’m married to my husband, Ronald, who attended with me the first time I came, but hasn’t come since. He realized that I get so involved in sewing during this time that he essentially becomes a bachelor anyway, so he doesn’t come with me anymore.” She looked over at Sabrina. “Hopefully your husband finds more to keep him busy during the retreat than mine did,” she said, laughing. “Anyway, I live in Sandy, Utah and work at the front desk of a doctor’s office as my day job. I have three kids. One is in college and two are still in high school. My husband is an electric contractor so he stays pretty busy even when I’m away. I’ve got kind of a broad taste in the projects I choose. One of my quilts is super bright, almost gawdy you might say. But I also like earth tones, so

another of my projects has a lot of browns, greens, and tans, accented with deep reds and orange, sort of like fall foliage. I just wanted to give you fair warning, because you’ll wonder if I am seriously schizophrenic.” Everyone at the table laughed as they found Sophia to have a delightful and entertaining personality.

“Well I guess that just leaves me,” Miriam said, looking around at her tablemates and smiling. “I guess I feel a little outside the club. My name is Miriam Walker, which means I’m the only person at the table whose name does not begin with ‘S.’” Realization dawned upon the other three at the table and they all laughed at the coincidence. “As you can tell from my accent,” Miriam continued, “I hail from the South. I live in Sheridan, Arkansas and have my whole life. I married my high school sweetheart and we just celebrated our thirty-seventh anniversary.” A murmur of congratulations came from the other three at the table. “Thank you,” Miriam continued. “We’ve had a glorious run together, although the Good Lord had never seen fit to bless us with children. Still, our life together has been a joy and I can hardly wait to see what the next thirty-seven years brings us. As for projects, I always have a number of them in progress at any given time. I just love finishing projects and I love starting new ones. In fact, I expect to start three new projects by the end of the retreat here at the Ranch. I just want to say it’s a true pleasure getting to know each of you.”



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The four women enjoyed talking and getting to know one another the rest of the evening and through the following day. Their topics of conversation ranged from discussing children and grandchildren to favorite foods. On the second night of the retreat, Miriam opened a topic that had them all thinking. “Have you all been following the Powerball Lottery?” she began. “I see it’s now past a billion dollars in size again. Do any of you play it?”

Everyone at the table smiled a little sheepishly and admitted that when it got that large, they all played it. “In my mind, I know the chances of winning are about the same as getting hit by a meteor,” Sabrina observed, “but there is always that element of hope. I’m sure that’s what drives the sales of the lottery tickets.”

“So, what would you do if you won it?” Miriam asked. “Everybody likes to play that game of ‘what if,’ so let’s hear what you would all do.”

Sharon spoke up first. “At my age, most of the things I would have purchased as a younger woman aren’t nearly as exciting to me today. However, I think the first thing I would buy, after paying all my bills, would be the most luxurious motor home I could find. Since my children and grandchildren live in other places, I would spend my time driving from one child to another and spoiling my grandchildren rotten.”

“You’d be willing to drive a huge motorhome around the nation yourself?” asked Sophia.

Sharon laughed. “Oh no. With all of that money, I’d hire a driver!”

Everyone chuckled at the thought. After a brief pause, Sophia decided to offer her fantasy. “With that much money, I would buy a yacht that is large enough to live on. My husband and I could sail around the Mediterranean and anchor off the coast of Greece and Italy and France, where we could visit the towns and cities along the coastlines. I’d love to get to know those exotic people, grow to know their cultures, and taste all of the foods of those lands.”

“What about your kids?” Sharon asked. “One in college and two in high school didn’t you say?”

“Oh,” Sophia laughed, “they could visit us during their summer vacation.”

That unexpected response brought a laugh from everyone at the table. “I’ll go next,” Sabrina declared. “A couple of years ago, our family took a Saturday and visited Hearst Castle, which is about a three-hour drive from where we live in Fresno. We spent the entire day there looking over the grounds and touring through the castle itself. I wondered what it must have been like to have lived there in its heyday the way William Randolph Hearst did. Apparently, it was quite an honor to be invited to visit Mr. Hearst and he entertained some of the most famous people in the world at the time. I remember seeing that Charlie Chaplain, Clark Gable, and Joan Crawford vacationed there. In fact, there was a whole list of famous people that I can’t even remember now who spent time at the Hearst Castle. Anyway, I was impressed with the design and the

opulence of the place. Even if I won this huge lottery, I doubt I could build something quite that elaborate, but I think would like to build a castle to live in. Maybe somewhere in California, on a hill with a view.” She looked around at her tablemates. “Too much?”

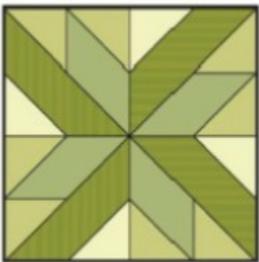
“Of course not,” Miriam declared. “After all, we’re just fantasizing, right? We all know that none of this has a real chance of coming to pass. It’s just fun to imagine.”

“What about you, Miriam?” Sabrina asked. “You haven’t told us what you would do.”

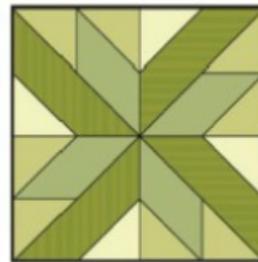
Miriam looked thoughtful for a minute. “Well,” she finally said, “I feel a little like Sharon does. At my age, I already have found satisfaction in life and don’t want or need for much. I guess if I won the lottery, it would make sense to build a garage onto our house. When we bought our house, it came with a double car port and I had always thought it would be nice to have some additional space for our cars and to have some additional room for storage.”

“You wouldn’t just buy a new house that had a large garage?” Sophia asked.

Miriam smiled. “You know, we imagine all of the things we would do with an amount of money that is beyond our comprehension. But I wonder if it became a reality, that we would actually act differently than we imagine. I guess it’s possible that Tony and I would get a new house with a large garage, but as things stand, I’m perfectly comfortable and satisfied with my current arrangement. We’ve lived in this house our entire married lives and the thought of trading up just doesn’t hold that much



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appeal. I think I would find other ways to spend the money.”

Everyone at the table nodded, acknowledging the wise point that Miriam had made as they turned their attention back to their projects for a time. After a few minutes of hearing nothing but their sewing machines and the din of muffled conversation in the barn’s large workspace, Miriam spoke up again. “I have an idea,” she said. “We all talked about how we could spend the lottery money on ourselves. But if you had to choose someone else to spend money on, who would that be and how would you spend it?”

Nobody answered at first as they all contemplated the thought of spending money on someone else. Finally, Sabrina came to a conclusion and spoke up. “You know, my parents live in Jerome, Idaho, which is where I grew up. My dad has always worked as a farm machine operator for his whole life. They didn’t own their own farm, so my dad worked the tractors and harvesters for some of the big farms in our area. He liked his work but my parents just never had much money and hardly ever had enough to leave the state of Idaho, even to visit a larger city like Salt Lake. A few years ago they had hoped to save enough money to take a cruise, but the car broke down and they ended up using their savings to get it fixed. My husband and I would like to send them on a cruise, but living in California is so expensive, we haven’t been able to save any money ourselves. If I won any money at all, I would probably find a way to send them on a cruise.

“Since this is a fantasy about spending on other people,” Miriam said, “be specific about what you would do for them. What are your parents’ names and what kind of a cruise would you send them on?”

Sabrina looked thoughtful. “Well, my parents are John and Tamera Oakley. My dad is sixty-one and my mom is sixty. Let’s see, I already told you where they live. As for cruises, I think they would be happy with almost anything, but since I just won a billion dollars in our fantasy lottery, I’d probably send them on a European River cruise. One of those that runs from Hungary up through Austria or Germany and takes three weeks to complete. Then maybe the next year I’d send them on an ocean cruise to the Bahamas!”

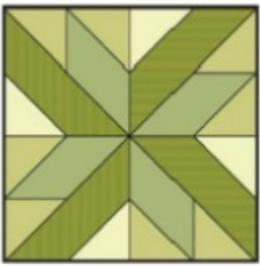
“I’ll go next,” Sharon said. “I hope I can tell you my fantasy without breaking into tears. My brother’s name is Terry White and he lives in Idaho Falls just a few miles from me. His oldest daughter is named Ella. About a year ago, Ella came down with some sort of infection, which was actually pretty minor. The hospital gave her one of the standard antibiotics that they administer a hundred times a day to people, but Ella had an extremely bad reaction to it. It caused many of her organs to go into failure and shut down and she almost died. Fortunately, they were able to save her, although she did have to get a liver transplant...but she’s almost back to normal now. Unfortunately, my brother Terry and his wife Patricia have just over two hundred thousand dollars in medical

bills to pay and there’s no way they’ll ever be able to come up with that on the salaries they make. Our family and some friends have helped, but that’s just too big a medical bill for any of us to manage.”

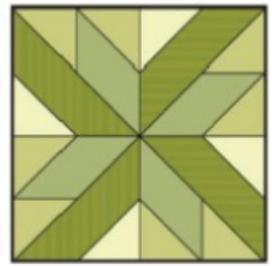
“Isn’t the hospital responsible? Or aren’t they willing to make some kind of arrangement?” Sabrina asked.

“There was some legal wrangling already, but to make a long story short, the hospital and the doctors are not responsible. They’ve actually all been quite accommodating and good to work with. In fact, they have already written off almost half of the original bill. But there is still the amount remaining that I told you about. They just take it day by day and hope they don’t end up in bankruptcy.”

Around the table, everyone offered condolences to Sharon along with best wishes that her brother’s family could find a way out of their financial predicament. “I’ve got somebody I wish I could help,” Sophia said. “There’s a family who goes to our church that I’ve come to know pretty well. Their last name is Richfield and they live just one street over from where I live in Sandy, Utah. I’ve come to know the wife quite well as several of us from the church have organized meals and other help to see the family through a tough time. Her name is Vera and her husband Mike suffered a terrible fall as he was trying to repair a vent or something on the roof of their house. He had been working as a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning technician for an HVAC company, but physically he’s unable to do so now. Since the injury



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didn't occur on the worksite, he's not eligible for workers' comp. I worry about them because Vera doesn't work outside the home and they have five kids between the ages of one and twelve. Their house is modest but, because housing prices in our area are so high, their house payment has eaten through their savings. Neighbors and church members have helped a lot, but that can't go on forever and by the end of the year, they'll probably lose their house. Breaks my heart, really. If I had the money, I would solve that particular problem for them. I'd even be willing to forego my yacht in the Mediterranean!" The last comment brought a somber chuckle from the other three quilters at the table. "What about you, Miriam?" Sophia asked. "Who would you spend money on if not for yourself?"

Miriam smiled at the invitation. "All y'all are so altruistic!" she answered. "The first thing that comes to my mind is my husband Tony. When we were first married, he had a Harley-Davidson motorcycle that he loved. But he loved me more, so he sold it to buy me a new refrigerator, washer, and dryer for the house we moved into. Ever since then, he has wanted to get a brand new Harley but other expenses always came up so it has been delayed and delayed. We'll be driving along and motorcycles coming the other way will pass us and I'll catch him glancing after them like a puppy who sees his master walk out the front door. If I won the lottery, the first thing I would do is send him down to the Harley-Davidson dealership to pick out the best motorcycle he could lay eyes on." Miriam paused for a moment and looked around the table. "That might not

seem as big a deal as some of your aspirations, but my Tony has given me so much over the years and has sacrificed so much of himself, I would think of him before anyone else."

Everyone nodded their approval and the group fell silent again for a few minutes as they all turned back to their projects. Before long, Sharon began talking about growing up in Idaho and soon the ladies were all engaged in conversation again. Over the remaining days of the retreat, the four women grew into close friends, and as the last hour of the retreat passed by them as they prepared their sewing machines and projects for departure, they all promised to stay in touch with one another. There were many tears shed as they all bid one another goodbye.

Sabrina hit the icon on her phone that she had saved under Sophia's name. After two rings she heard Sophia greet her. "Sophia," Sabrina said, a level of excitement rising in her voice, "I just got off the phone with Sharon. Remember at the retreat how we talked about things we would do for other people if we ever won the lottery? Well, it's happened! All of Sharon's brother's medical bills have been paid off and somebody donated fifty thousand to their GoFundMe account."

"No kidding!" Sophia replied. "Would you believe somebody paid off the house of our neighbor that I told you all about? Nobody knows who did it, but the total cost was well over two hundred thousand dollars!"

"Well let me make it three for three then," Sabrina said. "Somebody sent my parents tickets for a three-week

European river cruise along with five thousand dollars of spending money. Who do you think was listening in on our conversation? Who could know all of this?" Sabrina paused for a moment. "You don't suppose...could it have been Miriam that did all of this? Has anybody talked to her yet?"

"I haven't," Sophia replied. "But I'll tell you what. I'll call her to see if I can find anything out. This is absolutely unbelievable! I've never heard of anything like this happening!"

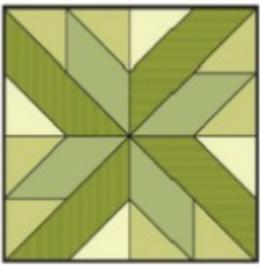
Miriam was just hanging up the phone as Tony walked through the door from the garage. She had heard him ride his motorcycle up the driveway and into the third stall of the garage where he parked it. That was the thing about Harley-Davidson motorcycles. They were loud and made a very distinct rumble when they approached. "Hi Honey," she greeted.

"Hi Sweetie," he replied, as they each used the pet names they had used for one another over the course of their whole married lives. "Who was on the phone?"

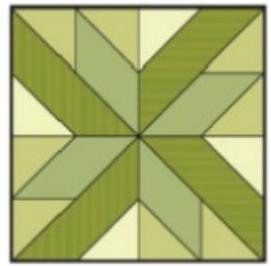
"One of my friends from the quilt retreat," she answered. "She told me somebody had spent a ton of money helping out some families we had discussed while we were sewing. She asked if anyone had done something for us."

"Huh," Tony said. "What did you tell her?"

"I told her somebody had bought my husband a Harley-



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Davidson motorcycle and made that particular dream of his come true.”

“So they don’t have any idea who the great benefactor is?” he asked.

“Nobody knows. It is a great mystery.” She reached over and took her husband’s hand. “Do you ever think about buying a lottery ticket?”

Tony snorted. “What would be the point? We’ve already won the thing once, and in the five years since that time, we haven’t even begun to make a dent in the size of our bank account.” He smiled at her. “Despite your many ‘projects’ we couldn’t spend the money we have even if we had two more lifetimes to do it. We’ll never even come close to using it all.”

“No,” Miriam responded with a sly smile, “but it sure is fun to try.”

The End