

# Rocky Mountain Wa Shonaji Quilt Guild

March 2024



## Join Wa Shonaji Sew-In March 9; Celebrate 30 Years of Wa Shonaji on April 6

At its **March 9** meeting Rocky Mountain Wa Shonaji Quilt Guild will hold a **Charity Sew-In**. Fabric for the sew-in was donated by Luana Rubin of eQuilter. During the sew-in, we will pin the quilt sandwich, quilt, and bind. Bring your sewing machine, machine quilting thread, quilters' safety pins, and lunch. To date, one recommendation has been received to give the quilts to the American Red Cross. Other recommendations are welcome. Karen von Phul can answer your questions.

On the same date Artie Johnson will teach a class on Quilt Labeling for the **beginner quilting class**. No sewing machine is required for this class. If you plan to participate in this class, please contact Cassie Sewell.

The **Foundation Pieced Crazy Quilt Block** for the 30th anniversary quilt is due March 9. Contact Brenda Ames or Joanne Walton if you have questions or need a foundation.

Also at the March 9 meeting, **sign up for:**

- May 4 **Bargello Workshop** with Carolina Monsalve. Members \$25. Supply list to follow. Contact Linda White.
- June 1 **Field Trip**, a visit to Rocky Mountain Quilt Museum, Golden Quilt Company, and lunch. No member fee. Contact is Linda White.
- June 8, **Improv with a Curve** workshop. Member fee \$10. Contact Linda White.
- July 13, **Reclamation Alchemy lecture** by Eliu Hernandez, a denim textile artist. Member fee \$10. Contact Linda White.

### Upcoming Events

Wa Shonaji's **30th Anniversary luncheon** will be held April 6 at West Woods Golf Club, 6655 Quaker Street, Arvada 80007. The cost of \$40 is due March 27. No refunds after that date. Contact Connie Turner.

Part 2 **Fabulous Stitching** will meet April 13. This class is full. Cording/ Couching w/machine, Machine Decorative Stitches. Contact Linda White.

Part 3 **Fabulous Stitching** will meet May 4. This class is full. Edge finishing and hanging. Contact Linda White.

The photo of the 30th Anniversary pin above right is the actual pin that you may purchase and wear with pride!

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### Upcoming Programs

- March 9—Charity Quilt Sew-In
- April 6—30th Anniversary Celebration Luncheon
- May 4—Bargello Workshop
- June 8—Improv with a Curve

## President's Message

Wow, Wa Shonaji! We are only two months into 2024 and we've accomplished a lot, mostly because we've had to.

The January embellishment class resulted in very impressively decorated blocks for the anniversary quilt. Kudos to all of you who did hand embroidery on your blocks.

In February, Bill Bynum, Chief Executive Officer of Hope Credit Union, delivered a very impactful presentation that mostly focused on how minority populations are managed differently by the established financial systems. Bill's presentation is attached for your information. Bill asked that I thank you all for braving the snow to attend his presentation. For those of you who wanted to follow up on Bill's presentation, he will provide contact information so let me know if you need it. He and Denise are looking forward to receiving the "outrageously beautiful" quilt that we will deliver to them.

In the meantime... Karen, Joanne, Stephanie, Deborah, Linda, Mary, Gloria, and myself worked

to complete the "Gem of the Ocean" quilt, which will be featured in this August Wilson play scheduled to start at the Aurora Fox Theater March 24. See next page for and opportunity to attend the play with other Wa Shonaji members.

And we've just scheduled a workshop for bargello, taught by Carolina Monsalve, for May 4. Sign up next week!

What continues to be true about The Rocky Mountain Wa Shonaji Quilt Guild is that we do whatever is required to make the Guild work/function. Thank you for all that you all do.



*A bargello quilt*

Joette Bailey-Keown, President

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## Guild Board Plans for 2024

The RMWQG Board met January 26. At that meeting, board members presented their annual reports. Based on those reports, the Guild has a sound plan to manage the overall functioning of the Guild.

One change we discussed was a change in the general meeting format/agenda: We will move "Show and Share" to earlier in the meeting. The goal is to ensure that we have the time to enjoy what we all enjoy most about the Guild and that is quilting. A suggested agenda would be as follows:

- Call meeting to order
- Program Update
- Sunshine and Shadows
- Show and Share

### Exhibits

Other business (to include items/decisions requiring member approval)

Other committees will report only as required if the committee leader has new information to report.

Finally, I stressed that the Guild should continue to focus on growth and succession planning. Note that in 2023, Guild membership increased by slightly over 20 percent. Our "Each one Teach one" theme will allow us to make progress on both of these goals.

Joette Bailey-Keown, President

## See Wa Shonaji Quilt on Stage in Aurora

Members and friends of the Rocky Mountain Wa Shonaji Quilt Guild are invited to attend “Gem of the Ocean,” a play by August Wilson, on Saturday, March 23, at 7:30 p.m. at the Aurora Fox Arts Center. The play features a quilt made by Guild members.

The group rate for the play is \$26.00 per person. The play promoters asked that we pay as a group so, if you want to attend with the group, payment will be collected at the March 9 meeting.

A 2005 Tony Award Nominee for Best Play, “Gem of the Ocean” is the first in the Aurora Fox’s commitment to produce August Wilson’s ten-play “The American Century Cycle.”

Boasting multiple Tony Awards and Pulitzer Prizes for Drama, the cycle follows the lives of Black Americans throughout each decade of the twentieth century. The play will continue through April 14.



*This Wa Shonaji-made quilt stars in “Gem of the Ocean” at the Aurora Arts Center.*

## DIA Exhibit Extended through March

Perfect Patchwork, a celebration of quilting in Colorado, has been held over for an extra month.

In addition to Rocky Mountain Wa Shonaji Quilt Guild, this special exhibit includes works from the Denver Metro Modern Quilt Guild, Colorado Quilting Council, and Rocky Mountain

Quilt Museum. The quilts and other quilted objects—like a pair of tennis shoes!—represent the city of Denver, capture the essence of Colorado’s natural beauty, and depict themes of aviation.

Check out the exhibit at [www.flydenver.com/about/art\\_culture/perfect\\_patchwork](http://www.flydenver.com/about/art_culture/perfect_patchwork)

**Don't waste brain power doing the math to figure out how much fabric you need.  
Just buy the bolt!**

—[Jacquelynn/steves.com](http://Jacquelynn/steves.com)

## Trunk Show Wows Black Genealogy Search Group

Thanks to all of you who participated in *any way* in the Trunk Show we presented to the Black Genealogy Search Group (BGSF) of Denver on Saturday, February 24, 2024. It was well received by those in the audience as well as those on Zoom.

We had a little hiccup in the beginning since the room we were scheduled to be in was not available. To quote Annie Mabry: “Blair-Caldwell [African-American Research Library] is a polling station and the election committee decided to change the date and time when they set up their equipment and polling machines, so we had to move to a smaller location, and a very efficient technically setup room. HOWEVER, the two organizations, along with the library staff made it work!!!”



*Led by Mary Lassiter, the Wa Shonaji Chorus performed.*

We are a resilient group of quilters and know how to work around obstacles, just as we do in our piecing and quilting projects. The Genealogy group members are accustomed to “stumbling blocks” as well as they conduct their research to find ancestors and sometimes long-lost family members.

About 50 people were present at the library and I do believe 19 or so on Zoom. We had many favorable comments in the Zoom Chat section.

Thanks to *each and everyone* who had a quilt or quilts in the Trunk Show. Thanks also to those who held quilts for the audience and those on Zoom to see, and those who folded the quilts so that they could be returned safely to their owners.

As always, the Wa Shonaji Chorus, under the leadership of Mary Lassiter, was AWESOME as they led us in song during our shared celebration of



Black History Month. They sang “This Little Light/Quilt of Mine,” “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” and “Wade in the Water.” Mary sang “Steal Away.”

Brenda Ames, you were AWESOME with the script reading/interpretation. I think we were able to impart a lot of historical knowledge to the audience and they appreciated it all.

This was Stephanie Hobson’s first time sorting the quilts and getting them out to be shown to the audience in a timely manner. She appreciated the assistance of Linda White and others. This was another of those moments when we missed our beloved Marcia Walker, who usually took on this task. Thanks also to those of you in the audience who came out to support Wa Shonaji Quilt Guild and the Black Genealogy Search Group.

I’d like to express a special thanks to our BEE members who assisted with the behind the scenes preparation by helping to get the quilts in order on



*Quilts celebrate the Underground Railroad.*

our Bee day. No, we didn't sew that day, but it was an AWESOME feeling to have those quilts numbered and placed in the suitcases and ready for the Trunk Show.

Our next Trunk Show will be for the Front Range Contemporary Quilters— FRCQ | Art Quilters | Front Range Contemporary Quilters—on June 17, 2024. It will be a Hybrid – In Person and Zoom program. Their meetings start at 7 p.m. They meet at 10455 W 6th Ave #100, Lakewood, CO 80215.

As the time gets closer, we will put out a call for quilts for this Trunk Show.

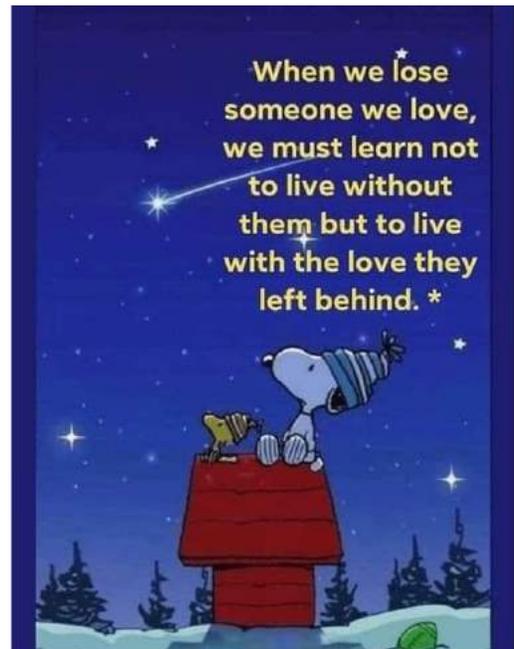
Sewfully,  
Joanne Walton  
Exhibits Coordinator



*Quilt by Hystercine Rankin (1929–2010), Port Gibson MS. She was mother of a BGSQ member's husband.*

## Wa Shonaji Mourns Passing of Member Dell Nichols

Dell Nichols (right) beloved sister of Gloria Montgomery, passed on Wednesday, February 21, in Broomfield, CO. She loved reading, writing, drawing, and spending time with her family but, most of all, she loved the Lord. Dell had recently joined Wa Shonaji. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Nichols and Montgomery families.



## Committee Reports



### 30th Anniversary Committee

“We Are Family, I have Wa  
Shonaji and Guests with me...”

Singing and celebrating is what we will be doing April 6. Please join us at the luncheon to celebrate Wa Shonaji being in existence for 30 years. Yes—our 30-year anniversary. What a milestone! We’ve been in existence longer than some of our current members have been on this earth.

The committee has been working diligently to make the occasion a memorable one. Symbolic of 30 years, there will be an abundance of lilies, the color green, and pearls (attendees are asked to sport theirs). For those who live to eat and eat to live, like myself, the menu consists of:

1) Caprese Grilled Chicken on a bed of spinach with roasted red peppers, fresh mozzarella, chimichurri, and balsamic glaze drizzle OR

2) Grilled Salmon Fillet with mango salsa with roasted red potatoes and the club's choice of 2 vegetables AND

Cheesecake with assorted toppings

The cost to attend the luncheon is \$40 and if you have not yet paid, we encourage you to do so at the March 9 meeting. (It can also be mailed to Treasurer Geneva Lottie.) Please be mindful that the final date for payment is March 27, 2024. (NO REFUNDS AFTER THIS DATE. Please see January 19 email sent by Joanne Walton.)

Work on the commemorative book is coming along. Quilts have been photographed and the subcommittee is working to include historical information. Members will be informed when the cost has been determined. A key factor is the number ordered. We are taking pre-orders, so if you have not yet let us know you want one (or 2, 3...), a sign-up sheet will be circulated at future meetings.

Crazy quilt blocks are due at the March meeting. **Please note** that blocks received after this date might not be included in the quilt (deadlines are deadlines for a reason as we need time to assemble it). Volunteers are needed to assist in this endeavor.

—Connie Turner

### Comfort Quilts

We currently have 21 comfort quilts in inventory. Seven quilts were gifted to members in need, from Dec. 2023 through Feb. 2024.

A friendly reminder that each member is expected to donate a quilt each year in their birthday month or sometime within that year. This not only makes sure that we maintain a supply of quilts for all members when the need arises, but also gives members the opportunity to sharpen their skills and get in the habit of producing at least one quilt each year.

The size of your quilt can range from 36"x54" (lap quilt), 54"x72" or 54"x90" (twin size) to 90"x108" (full). Please check our website for more sizing information. You may bring your finished quilt to our meeting, where I would be happy to collect it.

Again, a big thank you to those members who donated quilts last year.

—Your Comfort Quilt Chairperson  
Nanci Vaughn

### Exhibit Committee

Wa Shonaji is *already* on the move for quilt exhibits in 2024. Our next opportunities for exhibiting our quilts will be:

**June 17, 7:00 p.m.** Trunk show for Front Range Contemporary Quilters. More information to follow.

—Exhibit Committee: Joanne Walton with  
Linda White, Mary Lassiter, Stephanie Hobson

### Library

I will resume bringing books monthly starting in March. These books were purged from our library. Because there were over 200, only a few will be brought in every month until they are **ALL GONE**. These books will be on the FREE TO ALL table though donations are encouraged. The current list of books is on our website. Please contact me if you would like to check one out.

—Connie Turner

## Wa Shonaji Celebrates Black History Month

February 3 was a snowy, cold, blustery day but about 30 members and guests of Rocky Mountain Wa Shonaji Quilt Guild attended the guild's Black History Month Celebration.

Mary Lassiter explained that we decorate our lunch boxes to honor African Americans who car-



*Mary Lassiter (right) explains why we decorate our lunch boxes, while Chris Jacques shows hers.*

ried their lunch when they traveled nearly 100 years ago because they weren't allowed in most restaurants. Several members showed their boxes and explained their decoration choices.

Our speaker Bill Bynum, CEO of Hope Credit Union and cousin of our president Joette Bailey-



*Bill Bynum stands next to a quilt made by his cousin, our president Joette Bailey-Keown.*

Keown, spoke on "Financial Freedom," describing the importance of home ownership in increasing the wealth of African Americans and other minorities. He also discussed Hope Credit Union's efforts to increase home ownership. Bill spoke with members for quite a while after his speech.



*Joette Bailey-Keown holds a block honoring Rosa Parks, made by Artie Johnson. It will be part of a Civil Rights-themed quilt to be made for Bill Bynum in appreciation of his speaking. He holds a certificate promising an "outrageously beautiful quilt."*



Joette presented him with a certificate promising to deliver an outrageously beautiful quilt.

The party ended early so participants could dig out their cars before heading for home.



*Look what Joette Bailey-Keown found in her scrap pile—the center of this quilt! She said she has no idea when she started this but... she likes the result. Onto the next item in the scrap pile! What's in your pile of scraps?*



## Rita Meyerhoff Teaches the Fine Art of Crazy Quilt Embellishment

After the meeting on January 6, Rita Meyerhoff hosted an embellishment workshop with about 20 people in attendance. Rita brought quilts that are filled with a myriad of beautiful and intricate stitches and a variety of textures, colors, and motifs.

During the class, Rita demonstrated various ways to embellish our crazy quilt squares for the 30th Anniversary quilt. She showed how to use satin ribbon to make a concertina rose, “U” flower, and leaf. We also practiced the buttonhole stitch, blanket stitch, and feather stitch.

Her husband set up a “store” with tons of embellishments. There were satin ribbons in multiple colors and widths, charms, appliques, perle cotton, floss, laces and trims, needles, scissors, and more.

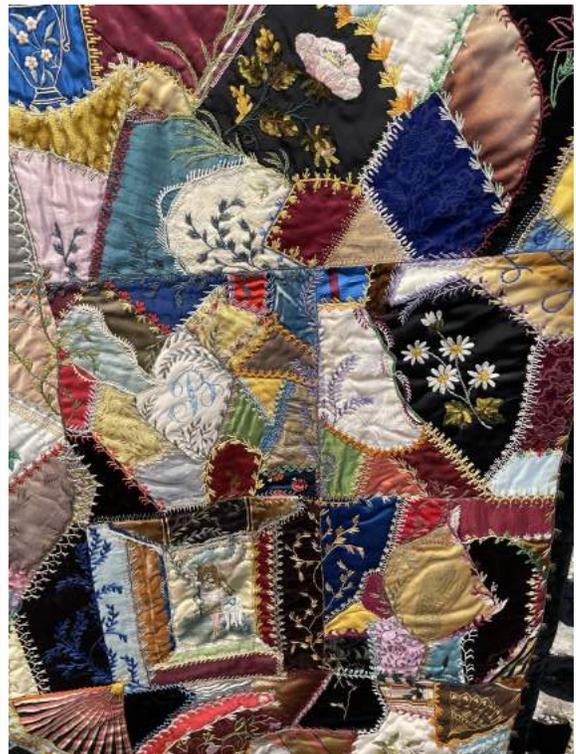
Rita also recommended a few books on embellishment, which included Judith Baker Montano’s *Embroidery & Crazy Quilt Stitch Tool*, Carole Sampler’s *Treasury of Crazy Quilts*, and J. Marsha Michler’s *Magic of Crazy Quilts and Motifs for Crazy Quilting*.

We can’t wait to see members’ embellished crazy quilt squares! Don’t forget, the crazy quilt blocks for the 30th anniversary quilt are **due March 9!** Bring them to the meeting or mail/deliver to Brenda Ames or Joanne Walton.

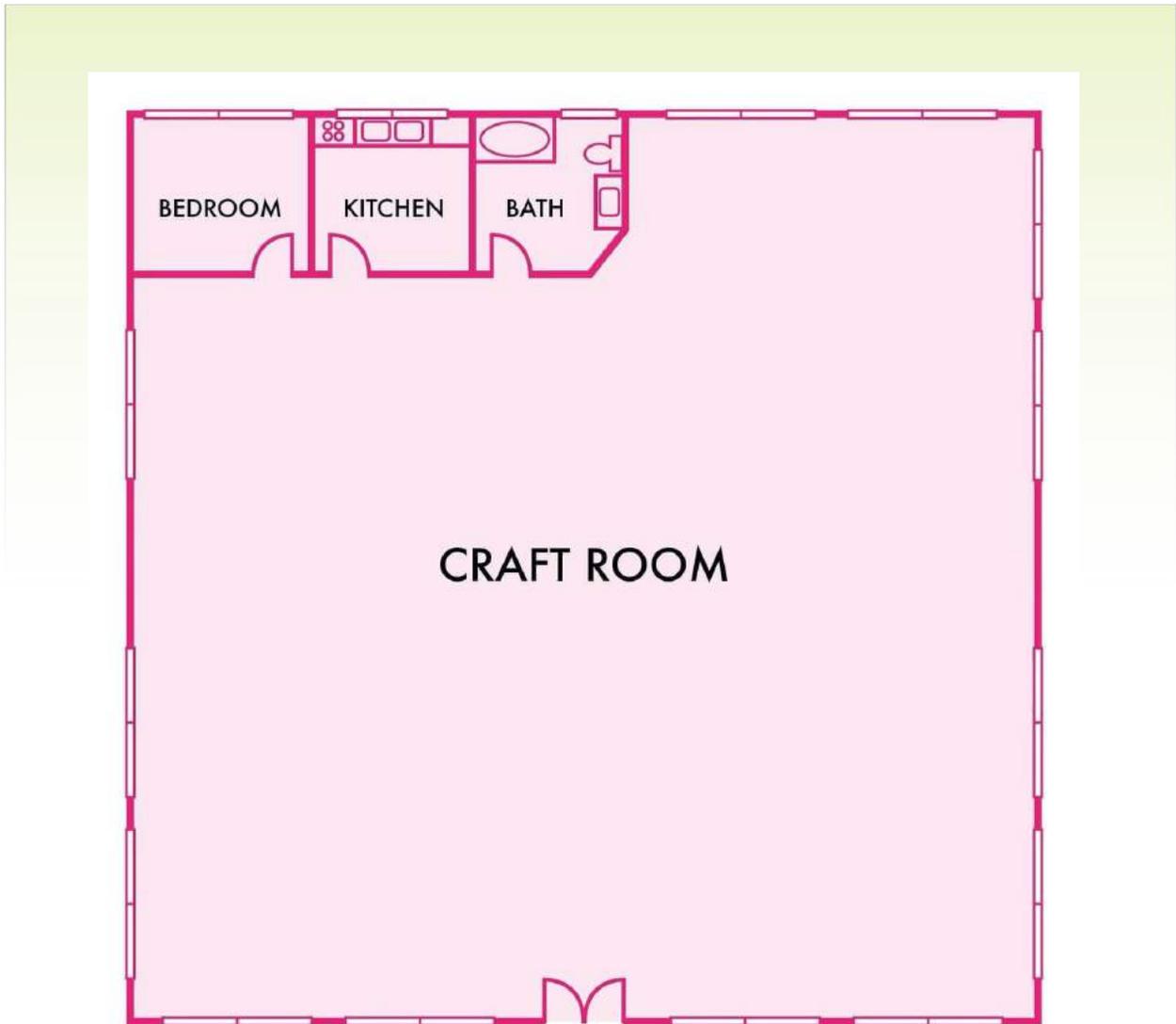
—Daryn Miller



Rita points out specific ways to enhance a quilt with embroidery and trims .



Closeups of fancy stitching on Rita’s quilts.



*Monica Lynn says this is her dream house! She found this "blueprint" on Facebook.*

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### **For a More Enjoyable Show 'n Share**

If you do not provide a photo of your Show 'n Share project to Linda White ahead of time, please fill out the form on the next page. Two copies per quilt or other item—one for the website, one for the newsletter. This will enable more accurate information in those media.

**SHOW AND SHARE Completed Quilt**

Please PRINT LEGIBLY

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Dimensions \_\_\_\_\_ width X \_\_\_\_\_ length

Quilt Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Dominant Color \_\_\_\_\_

Maker Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Quilter (if artist did not quilt): \_\_\_\_\_

Pattern Source or Original Design? What was the inspiration? No more than 3 sentences.

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**SHOW AND SHARE Completed Quilt**

Please PRINT LEGIBLY

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Dimensions \_\_\_\_\_ width X \_\_\_\_\_ length

Quilt Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Dominant Color \_\_\_\_\_

Maker Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Quilter (if artist did not quilt): \_\_\_\_\_

Pattern Source or Original Design? What was the inspiration? No more than 3 sentences.

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## More Than 100 Years after Her Death, a Revered Quilter Is Honored in Athens [Georgia]

One of the surviving quilts of Harriet Powers, a formerly enslaved quilter, is in the Smithsonian.

*Reprinted by permission of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Dec. 4, 2023.*

ATHENS —Years ago, quilting friends Sandy Benjamin-Hannibal and Peggy Hartwell came to Gospel Pilgrim Cemetery on Fourth Street, looking for the grave of Harriet Powers, an African American quilter buried in 1910. Because the handmade marker they had found during another previous visit was gone, they were relying on memories to guide them through an overgrown tangle of vegetation.

The lack of permanent commemoration bothered the two women, and “I thought something’s gone to be done,” says Benjamin-Hannibal. She and Hartwell reached out to historian, curator and quilter Carolyn Mazloomi, founder of the Women of Color Quilting Network. The members responded, raising money for a granite headstone for the graves of Harriet and her husband Armstead.



*The Athens community gathered to celebrate the recommittal and dedication of a new headstone for Harriet and Armstead Powers Saturday December 2, 2023, at the Gospel Pilgrim Cemetery in Athens. The original grave marker had Powers' first name spelled with two t's, so the new one follows suit. Powers was an emancipated slave whose quilts can be seen at the Smithsonian Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. credit: Nell Carroll for the AJC*



*Carolyn L. Mazloomi, founder of Women of Color Quilters Network, speaks to a crowd gathered to celebrate Harriet and Armstead Powers. credit: Nell Carroll for the AJC*

Born a slave in 1837 on a plantation in neighboring Madison County, Harriet Powers married her husband in 1855, moved to Clarke County and started a family, eventually having nine children. Three of them survived into adulthood.

On Saturday, quilters from across the country, and non-quilters from Athens, gathered in the cemetery for a “recommittal and dedication ceremony” to celebrate and honor the two Powers with a new granite headstone. The event’s organizers said they were “shocked” at the number of people —about 100—who came to the ceremony. Mazloomi says she was expecting only ten people.

Two attendants were Lynette Warren and Marikay Waldvogel who came from Marietta and Tennessee. Gloria Larkin and Peggy Martin came from the Brown Sugar Stitchers in Dekalb County. Others came from Chicago and Houston.

Journalists and photographers from different quilting publications were also present, snapping photos and talking to quilters. The ceremony included a rendition of “We’re Climbing Jacob’s Ladder,” scripture readings, prayers and a litany honoring “ALL Black women for the contributions they have made and continue to make.”

## More about Memorializing Harriet Powers...



*The quilting community gathered to celebrate a new headstone for Harriet and Armstead Powers Saturday, December 2, 2023, at the Gospel Pilgrim Cemetery in Athens, GA. credit: Nell Carroll for the AJC*

Washington, D.C., resident Alyse Minter, Harriet and Armstead Powers' great-great-great granddaughter, spoke to the crowd about what she had learned from researching her ancestors: that she comes from a long line of strong women and that her Powers ancestors loved each other deeply. Her mother, Linda Minter, says she didn't know anything about her family history until Alyse started doing genealogical research a few years ago. She said the day's events left her feeling overwhelmed.

Scholars consider Powers to be the most important American artist in the story quilt tradition though only two of her creations survive: the Bible Quilt is in the Smithsonian Museum and the Story Quilt is in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Many quilters consider the Bible Quilt to be the most significant American quilt.

"Powers is one of the most important women artists, ever," says Jennifer Swope, the David and Roberta Logie Curator of Textiles at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. "What she's presenting is a cosmology." She believes the two quilts are the artist's masterworks. Powers herself called the Bible Quilt "the darling of my brain."

Featuring both hand and machine stitches, it's composed of 11 different panels, each illustrating a story from the Old or the New Testament, including the creation story, Cain murdering Abel, Jacob's dream, Satan amidst seven stars, the Crucifixion and the Holy Family.

Historian Kyra Hicks of Arlington, Virginia, is the author of "This I Accomplish: Harriet Powers Bible Quilts and Other Pieces." She says Powers made the

Bible Quilt in 1886 and entered it in a county fair in Athens. Jennie Smith, an art teacher at the Lucy Cobb Institute, initially wanted to buy the quilt, but Powers wouldn't sell it until her husband and she fell on hard times. Before releasing it, she told Smith what each of the panels meant, and Smith wrote down her explanations.

Smith also allowed Powers to come visit the quilt, which was later displayed at the Atlanta Cotton Exposition in 1895. The executor of Smith's estate kept the quilt for 20 years before giving it to the Smithsonian. "He apparently fell in love with it," says Hicks.

After seeing the Bible Quilt at the exposition, some faculty women from Atlanta University were so taken with it that they commissioned Powers' Story Quilt as a gift for a trustee, the Reverend Charles Cuthbert Hall, president of New York's Union Seminary. This work has fifteen pictorial panels, which tell both Bible stories "that illustrate her beliefs with stories that were told to her," says Mazloomi.

Powers documents with fabric an eclipse in 1780, an 1833 meteorite shower, and a cold day in 1895, as well as Jonah being swallowed by a whale, Christ being baptized with the spirit landing like a dove and Mary and Martha at the cross of Jesus.

"It's difficult to find a textile piece made by a named enslaved person, which is one reason Harriet's quilts are so revered, and to have documentation," says Hicks. "It's just phenomenal that she is still able to share her faith more than 100 years after she passed away. Phenomenal."



*Juandamarie Gikandi, of Princeton, NJ, shows a replica of a Powers quilt to Jan Hollins of Atlanta (far right), after the dedication ceremony. credit: Nell Carroll for the AJC*

## Wa Shonaji's Mary Lassiter Honors Colorado Pioneer with a Quilt

By Carolyn Somerville

On January 19, Mile High Ministries hosted the Grand Opening of Clara Brown Commons, a new housing development at 3701 York Street, in Denver. Mary Lassiter was one of several artists asked to create a piece for permanent installation in the complex. I interviewed Mary to talk about her quilt and its significance.

### *What is the title of the piece on display at Clara Brown Commons and where is it located?*

The quilt, named "Aunt Clara Brown's Song," hangs opposite the glass entrance to the chapel on the second floor. Aunt Clara, who was devout in her faith, was quoted as saying, "I just wanted to do what the Lord told me to do." Since she would often be heard singing, I included the words of an old Negro Spiritual, "Lord, I done done what you told me to do," as the quilt's focal point.

### *What is significant about Clara Brown? Tell us a little about her story and why she was honored with a building named after her.*

Born into slavery in 1800, Clara married, bore four children and, at 35, was sold and separated from her beloved family. When freed at age 56, she left Kentucky in search of them. Working as a cook, she travelled with a wagon train and became the first Black pioneer to settle in Colorado. Opening the first laundry in Central City, she worked not only as a laundress, but a midwife, cook, nursemaid, and real estate investor. By 1866, she had accumulated \$10,000 and invested in properties and mines in nearby towns. She was also a philanthropist who assisted with building several churches. Clara showed love to others in need, injured minors, and the homeless, and she held Sunday school in her home. She helped several former slaves move to Colorado.

Her journey was not easy, but she was a woman of strength, faith, perseverance, and honor. Aunt Clara Brown Commons was named for a woman whose attributes would be wonderful for others to emulate. These attributes encourage and may empower others to trust in the Lord, stick with one's

calling, do one's very best in it, and love your neighbor. She was inducted into the Colorado Hall of Fame and the Colorado Business Hall of Fame; also a statue in her honor is located in Central City and a stained glass of her is located in the State Capitol.

### *What was the inspiration behind your design and was there a particular theme you desired to capture?*

Aunt Clara Brown's life was an inspiration to me. The quilt has a medallion-style center and a pieced or appliqued block border. Each block tells a story. There is a block for Clara; Eliza Jane, her daughter; Wagon Wheels; Friendship Star; Baskets;



Tears; Churn Dash; Kansas State Flowers; Log Cabins; Colorado State Flowers; Clara's home; her laundry business; and a church. I included the song that rang in my head since the first time I read her quote. I enjoy the spirituals and I knew the words would be special. I sang a portion of the song in presenting the quilt to the tour groups at the building's grand opening.

### *As a quilter, how do you start the design? What is your creative process, for example, do you draft a design or work as you go along and feel led to do?*

## More about Aunt Clara Brown's Song...

My design process varies; sometimes it is an idea that takes flight or it may take a long time to embrace and ponder a concept. I don't draw the entire quilt but may draft certain components and portions. I gather many fabrics that I want to use, but may not use them all. The temperature of the fabrics may inform their use. Are they cool or warm in temperature and does it matter in the overall design? I ask myself "what do you want to say?" And "How do you want to say it?" What do you want to convey to your audience and/or how do you want them to feel or to know from your quilt?

### *What materials went into making the quilt, dimensions, predominate colors?*

The quilt measures 91 by 68 inches. Although Aunt Clara Brown lived during the 1800s (the Victorian Era), her life story was such an inspiration that instead of dark, subdued Victorian colors like grays, browns, beige, I chose bright, colorful batiks and hand-dyed fabrics to tell her story. I used blues mostly, but also complementary colors of orange, red, yellow, and purple. It feels monochromatic with a splash of light. The sky is created with five different fabrics using a curvy piecing technique. I embellished the quilt using mother of pearl and other buttons and whatnots. Although mostly batik, I also used print fabrics for the field of columbines and sunflowers, and an embroidered skirt for the field of flowers. Included are five scriptures about strength and guidance that were photo transferred.

### *Who commissioned you to create this beautiful remembrance of Clara Brown?*

Jeff Johnsen, Executive Director of Mile High Ministries, asked me to create this quilt. My heart

was happy to have the opportunity, having been a friend of the Johnsen's and Mile High Ministries for many years. After 17 years of prayer and persistent planning, the building finally came to fruition under his guidance. This is also a testimony of faith and I was honored to make a quilt for them.

### *Is this your first project for Mile High Ministries? Who are they?*

Mile High Ministries Mission statement reads: We seek God's peace for our city through

the creative, compassionate, and prayerful development of people and communities. Since 1988, we have cultivated communities of hope and healing in the heart of our beloved city, Denver. We put our mission into action through supportive housing, leadership development, and initiatives that strengthen our neighbors' capacity to thrive. See: [Milehighministries.org](http://Milehighministries.org).

Twenty-plus years ago, I donated a Bethlehem star to the Issachar Project, a school that was the brainchild of Mile High Ministries. The tribe of Issachar, in scripture "understood the times and knew what God's people

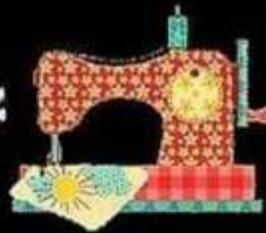
should do." (1 Chronicles 12:32) It is now called Issachar Center for Urban Leadership. Purpose, to equip and convene urban Christian leaders. See: <https://issachardenver.org/>.

### *How long have you been quilting?*

I have enjoyed quilting for more than 30 years. In the early years, I was self-taught and my inspirations were subjects close to my heart. Since joining Wa Shonaji, I have learned ways to enhance what I know about quilting and I am blessed and thankful to learn advanced ways of quilting such as paper piecing and free motion quilting. I love to teach too, which aligns with RMWSQG's motto "Each one Teach one."



# QUILTER'S CODE:



WIP : Work in Progress

UFO : Unfinished Object

PHD : Projects Half Done

PIG : Projects in Grocery Bags

WOMBAT : Waste of Money, Batting and Time

NESTY : Not Even Started Yet

PFC : Professional Fabric Collector

STABLE : Stash Accumulation  
Beyond Life Expectancy

WITHWIT : What In The Heck Was I Thinking

TIH : There Is Hope



## 12 Ways that Quilting Is Good for Your Mental Health

By Caroline Fairbanks-Critchfield Updated February 9, 2024  
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<https://sewcanshe.com/ways-that-quilt-making-is-good-for-your-mental-health>

Over half of Americans say they're worried about their mental health. If you're one of them, you might be looking for better ways to handle stress and anxiety.

### Try Making a Quilt!

A creative and relaxing hobby like quilting can give you relief from stressors in your life. Find out how quilting can improve your emotional well-being, lower stress, and decrease your blood pressure.

### Creative Activities Like Quilting Increase Serotonin and Decrease Cortisol

The American Psychological Association says that doing creative activities like sewing and quilting can help lower stress. This is because these activities can raise the level of serotonin, a chemical in our body and brain. More serotonin can make us feel happier, sleep better, and less anxious.

### These Activities Lower Levels of Cortisol



Photo credit: yamasan0708 / Shutterstock.com

A study reported by Utah State University found that making art can reduce stress. After creating art, they saw that about 75 percent of people in the study had lower cortisol levels, a stress hormone.

Quilting, which is a type of art, is popular with about 10–12 million people who make quilts in the United States. These quilters seem to have

found a great way to stay healthy, feel less stressed, and be happier!

### Quilting Lowers Blood Pressure and Hypertension



Taking part in creative and calming activities can help. Dr. Randy Cupps from South Denver Cardiology explains that when you spend time on a hobby or something you enjoy that isn't about work, you give your mind a break. This shift to something fun and enjoyable is good for your well-being, "As a result, your blood pressure and hypertension lower."

### Doing an Enjoyable Hobby Like Quilting Reduces Physical Tension

Many quilters I've talked to say that putting together a quilt can be incredibly relaxing, almost like being in a trance. Some psychologists call this feeling "flow," where you forget your worries. The hands-on work of quilting calms your nerves and helps your body relax. When I think about it, making clothes can be stressful because you have to worry about the fit, but quilting is different because a quilt will always fit!



Photo credit: Seth Pickett / Shutterstock.com

## Quilting Can Be a Healthy Addiction

Having a fun activity that takes your mind off stress and worries is important. The goal is to find a positive distraction that helps you grow and feel fulfilled. Some folks might joke that their partners are addicted to crafts or quilting. But really, many habits are not so good, like splurging on fancy cars, buying lots of lottery tickets, or using harmful substances. Compared to those, crafting or quilting seems like a pretty good choice.

## Quilting Enhances Hand-Eye Coordination and Fine Motor Skills



Photo credit: melnikof / Shutterstock.com

Making a quilt requires the ability to do small, exact movements repeatedly. The more quilts you make, the easier it gets. If you continue, it can help you keep your fine motor skills sharp as you get older.

## And Foot-Eye Coordination?



Photo credit: Minakryn Ruslan / Shutterstock.com

Don't forget, you'll spend lots of time using your feet to make the sewing machine sew. This must mean that quilting builds foot-eye coordination, too. Let's make the argument that quilting makes you a better driver!

## Quilting Provides a Sense of Purpose

Learning new skills always boosts an individual's self-esteem, but quilting is a hobby that



Image Credit: Tatyana Vyc/Shutterstock.com

results in tangible items that can benefit individuals, families, and communities. Helping others gives us a sense of purpose and makes activities more meaningful. There is no better way to lift your mood than to make someone smile.

## Gifting Your Quilts to Others Can Reduce Feelings of Hopelessness



Photo credit: fizkes / Shutterstock.com

Barak Obama said, "The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don't wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, and you will fill yourself with hope."

Quilting is more than just a hobby that feels good; it's also a valuable way to spend time. Quilts can be given to family, friends, or even people you don't know, and the care put into making a quilt is always valued.

## Self-Confidence Grows With Each New Quilt

Your self-confidence will increase when you finish a project that requires setting and reaching smaller goals to achieve a larger plan. Positive Psychology reports, "Making progress towards personally meaningful goals is the scaffolding upon which healthy self-confidence is built."

## Quilting Brings a Sense of Community



Photo credit: Monkey Business Images / Shutterstock.com

Your grandmother or great-grandmother may have gathered around a quilt at a quilting bee to chat, gossip, share ideas, and build friendships, all while creating a needed bed covering for someone in the group.

Modern quilters gather at quilt guild meetings, workshops, retreats, festivals, quilting cruises, and at their local quilt shop for classes and events. They find camaraderie and belonging by showing their quilts, sharing ideas and tips, and being inspired together.

## Quiltmaking Builds Connections with Others



Photo credit: Alexander Egizarov / Shutterstock.com

Quiltmaking brings quilters together and helps them feel connected to the wider community. Quilters often give away their quilts, making the recipients feel loved and the quilters feel like they're part of something bigger. They also share their skills by teaching individually or in groups, like in a class or workshop. Doing these things makes a quilter more in touch with the people around them.

## Quilting Helps Your Mind Stay Young



Photo credit: SewCanShe.com

Spending time on hobbies that let you learn and gain new skills is important. Henry Ford said, "Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young."

## Now, Go Make a Quilt!



Photo credit: SewCanShe.com

The benefits of quilting are no longer a secret. Quilters around the world enjoy better mental and physical health and are happier because quilting helps them relax. They make the most of their free time, build solid friendships, and help their community. Don't you want to make a quilt? Get started today with a free quilt pattern here <https://sewcanshe.com/easy-quilt-patterns-for-beginners>

Chris Jacques is back and, starting with this issue, is writing new installments of Sister Stitcher! Hurray!



## Sister Stitcher

*Have you met Sister Stitcher? She is a mythical quilter whose quarter inch never wavers, whose bobbin never runs out, and who finishes her projects on time. She lives in a house that never needs cleaning, with a spouse who cooks and holds up quilts as requested. Her studio space measures 100x100, with lots of natural light. Oddly enough, it never needs cleaning either.*

*Sister fields a question last answered by Mr. Stitcher.*

*Hello, Sister, remember me? I'm the man whose fiancée, Jocelyn, was an absolute angel to me and my family when my grandmother passed. We were looking for a quilty way to thank her, and Mr. Stitcher stepped up to the stitch plate. After some consultation with her quilty friends, I found a used Bernina 440, at a price my family could afford. That made Jocelyn cry harder than her engagement ring, and in a good way! We were married that summer, and it's been happiness all the way.*

*Fast forward to now. Sister, I caught the quilting bug from Jocelyn. It started innocently enough; she asked if I could help her reduce a 12-inch block. Easy, I'm a math teacher. But after scaling, something told me that one of her colors might be overpowered, and I encouraged her to try a bolder shade. It worked. Jocelyn went away happy, and I was left intrigued. I started paging through Jocelyn's Block Books.*

*Next thing I know, I've sewn some Log Cabin blocks from Jocelyn's discards. Then a little stash of my own and a rotary cutter. Sister, I finally understand why Jocelyn is so happy when she's sewing! After a hard day with too-cool students and a less than supportive administration (you feel me, **DeLois?**), sewing ends my day with a win. It's a balm to my soul.*

*Same for Jocelyn....and here's where the trouble starts. Two quilters plus one machine equals overcrowding. When I get home, it's so refreshing to sew a seam or two. Jocelyn gets home half an hour later, when I'm just getting into my sewing. And then we start bickering!*



*"Why isn't dinner started?"*

*"Well, why do I always have to start dinner?" Sister, you know it's not about dinner; it's about who gets to sew.*

*I get that the 440 is her machine. The "MINE" vibe is loud and clear. But why? I'm careful with the foot pedal, I brush out the bobbin area every time I use it, and I pack up my project to clear space for hers. It's a pain, but I do it. I get that it was a present to her, but I'm trustworthy. She married me, after all.*

*I'd love for us to share this wonderful pastime, but another 440 isn't in the budget right now. What do you suggest, Sister?*

*Maurice*

*Hello, Maurice. Welcome to the wonderful world of quilting, where quilters will share fabric, seam rippers, and wine. Sharing machines, especially if you live together, is trickier.*

*When they were first married, the Stitches bought a new machine together, one that could*

## More Sister Stitcher...

accomplish two goals: sewing outdoor gear, and quilting or garments. They tried one that sewed two leather strips without a whimper. Mr. Stitcher was hooked. Sister liked the integrated dual feed. They shared this workhorse until Mr. Stitcher's "guerilla sewing" projects threw off the tension. Before she throttled Mr. Stitcher, Sister found a machine of her own on Craigslist, at an amazing price. Peace reigned again.

The moral of the story: It sounds as if getting your own machine just might save your marriage, Maurice.

Of course you're trustworthy, and you are a role model for Life Skills classes when it comes to cleanup. But it's Jocelyn's machine. You gave that gift to her, and now you're crowding her. When she has a project going on, you are eating into her precious sewing time. Your project's needle may not be compatible with hers. Whatever. If your goals are to have a happy wife and to sew, two machines will let you go your separate ways together.



*Sigh. It does seem as if that would be for the best. What next?*

If Jocelyn's old machine is still around, and she allows you to use it, your problem is solved. For the price of repairs, you and Jocelyn could be sewing at opposite ends of the dining room table, leaving your projects set up. SET. UP, Maurice. You know how much time and frustration you save when you can leave a project set up? The dining room table will never be used for dining again, but you'll be happy.

If the old machine is no longer available, the Hunt for Maurice's Machine begins. Lucky you, you have an expert in your own home! How about asking Jocelyn to help narrow down what you

want in your machine? As the Stitchers did, you can spend many candlelit dinners over machine durability, knee lifts, and how most quilters don't use half the stitches on their machines. Hold hands; it's a deep soulful conversation.

*There are fancy stitches?*

Yes, Maurice, most machines have a few different stitches. After some experimenting, Sister found that they eat up a lot of thread. She uses them when she thinks a quilt could do with something prettier, maybe once a year. Unless you're embroidering, Maurice, the fancy stitches won't really figure into your sewing. But Sister is stealing Jocelyn's thunder.

With your previous practice looking for a machine, you know to check with local shops for floor models and repaired machines. (Avoid IKEA machines, though. Ask **Connie**.) Some of Jocelyn's quilting friends may be ready for a change too. Online For Sale sites can be good sources too, but the Stitchers strongly recommend testing the machine before handing over the cash. As Sister mentioned, she found a deal on Craigslist and spent a lovely hour with its Florida-bound owner, putting the machine through its quilting paces.



You and Jocelyn still have to work out the cooking and cleaning part of your sewing lives. But when the chores are done, Sister can see you and your lovely wife working on projects together and maybe sharing some of your stashes. With your math skills and eye for color and her quilting experience, you have a great deal to give one another. Good luck, Maurice!

## March

5 March – Joanne Walton

12 March – Linda Hernandez

13 March – Priscilla Brown

14 March – Milinda Walker

18 March – Linda White

20 March – Barbara Robinson

21 March – Pennie Estrada

25 March – Susan Morrison

28 March – Mary Lassiter



Photo from online pictures

## April

April – Adam Eberl

7 April – Kevin Humphrey

10 April – Cassandra Sewell

17 April – Monica Lynn

26 April – Edna Jones

## Area Textile Events

### Rocky Mountain Quilt Museum

200 Violet St., Golden, Mon–Sat 10–4; Sunday 11–4. \$12 adults; \$10 seniors; members free.

Till Apr 20 *17th Biennial Men's Exhibit* and Christine Copenhaver Solo Exhibit *Necktie Quilts Sunday at the Museum*, 2 pm. Mar 10 Guatemalan Textiles. No April program.

May 4, Fabric & Friends **Annual Fundraiser**, Luncheon, and Auction. See website.

More info at [www.rmqm.org](http://www.rmqm.org)

### Columbine Quilt Guild

Second Monday at Denver Church of Christ, 6925 Carr St., Arvada, at 6:30 p.m. In-person and Zoom. Guest fee \$5.

Mar 11, **Meeting**, *Color Confidence* by Jayne Eisendrath.

Apr 8, **Meeting**, *Just Cut the Scrap* by Michele Crawford. Zoom only.

For more information [columbineqg@gmail.com](mailto:columbineqg@gmail.com) or [www.columbinequiltguild.org](http://www.columbinequiltguild.org)

### Arapahoe County Quilters

Second Thursday at Our Father Lutheran Church, 6335 S Holly St, Centennial 80121. 6:30 pm. In-person and Zoom. Guest fee \$8.

Mar 14, **Meeting**, *Finding Pride & Joy in Quilting: My Journey*, foundation paper-piecing and design with Veruschka Karate

Apr 11, **Meeting**, *Artistry through Applique* with David Taylor

Apr 13, **Workshop**, *Pictorial Hand Applique* with David Taylor

Register at [acqcolorado.org](http://acqcolorado.org). For information [www.acqcolorado.org](http://www.acqcolorado.org)

### Quaking Aspen Quilt Guild

Third Thursday, noon. Boulder Valley Christian Church, 7100 S. Boulder Road, Boulder, or Zoom.

Mar 21, **Meeting**, *Quilt as Desired* with Dawna Sanders of The Quilt Store in Broomfield

Contact [vp-programs@quakingaspenquiltguild.org](mailto:vp-programs@quakingaspenquiltguild.org) or visit the website at [www.quakingaspenquiltguild.org](http://www.quakingaspenquiltguild.org)

### Denver Metro Contemporary Quilters

Second Wednesday at Table Public House, 2190 S. Platte Dr., Denver OR Aurora Fire Station 3, 3172 Peoria St., Aurora—check website for location. 7 p.m. In-person and Zoom. First meeting free; then \$5 fee. To attend as a guest, email [president@denvermetromqg.org](mailto:president@denvermetromqg.org)

Mar 13, **Meeting**, *Adventures in Quilting + "What we learned at QuiltCon"* at Table Public House

Apr 10, **Meeting**

For more information, visit [www.denvermetromodernquiltguild.org](http://www.denvermetromodernquiltguild.org)

### Colorado Quilting Council (CQC)

Meetings are held via Zoom and in person at Waterstone Community Church, 5890 S. Alkire St., Littleton 80127. In-person guest fee \$10. Workshops for members only.

Mar 23, **Meeting**, 9:30 a.m. *Tips and Tricks for Better Machine Quilting* with Cindy Seitz-Krug at Our Father Lutheran Church, 6335 S. Holly St, Centennial

Mar 24, **Workshop**, 9–4, *Gridded Quilting Designs*, a Machine quilting class with Cindy Seitz-Krug at High Country Quilts, 4727 N. Academy, Colorado Springs. \$65

Apr 27, **Meeting**, *Picture Piecing* with Cynthia England

For more information, visit [www.coloradoquiltingcouncil.com](http://www.coloradoquiltingcouncil.com). Or contact Pam Ballard [CQC.VP.Programs@gmail.com](mailto:CQC.VP.Programs@gmail.com). She can also give you Zoom info.





BABE, THERE'S  
NOTHING IN  
HERE BUT  
**FABRIC!**

I KNOW !!  
THE WEATHER GAL  
SAID WE COULD BE  
SNOWED IN FOR  
**DAYS!**

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## Need a Longarm Quilter?

Not really an endorsement, but members have used these people. Do you know of a longarmer we can add to our list?

### **Above & Beyond Sewing and Vacuum**

Mission Trace North Shopping Center, 3847 E 120th Ave, Thornton, CO 80233  
(303) 317-2004 – Patrick gave a talk to the Guild March 2023.

### **Kurt's Bernina Service – Factory Trained**

In home service • (303) 884-1245

### **Carolina Monsalve Longarm Quilting**

7127 S. Vandriver Way, Aurora, 80016  
cmonsalve@gmail.com  
(720) 705-1208 • Carolina taught the Thread Painting class May 2023.  
Also, in June 2023 she quilted the Guild's aviation quilt for the DIA exhibit

### **Quigley's Quilts by Kim Tocci**

Broomfield • (303) 818-2949  
Kim@quigleysquilts.com  
Any size quilt; \$0.02/square inch and up. Quick turnaround.

### **Terri's Longarm Quilting**

West side of Denver • (281) 543-3699  
tgoyins@aol.com  
\$0.02/square inch for edge-to-edge designs and generally \$0.03/square inch for custom designs

### **Purple Tutu**

Wendy Arend • (704) 641-8646  
<https://purpletutuquilting.com/services/>  
3615 So Truckee Way, Aurora CO 80013  
Quilting \$0.025/square inch and up  
Also Binding, backing, and baTTING

## New African Fabric Shop Opens Online

Quilt artist, teacher, speaker, and designer Kena Tangi Dorsey has opened her online shop offering African fabrics, patterns, kits, and cowrie shells.

She makes and sells wax print fat quarter bundles. "I have so many great African Fabric Fat Quarter Bundles, precuts, jelly rolls, charms and layer cakes, in just about every color-way! I can't wait for you to see them and shop!"

[Kenaquiltstudio.com](http://Kenaquiltstudio.com)



*Kena Quilt Studio African fabric fat quarter bundles*

## Rocky Mountain Wa Shonaji Quilt Guild

Wa Shonaji provides a warm, nurturing atmosphere to promote an interest in quilt making and other fiber arts primarily from an African-American perspective.

We educate ourselves and share our knowledge with others, based on the motto "Each One, Teach One." We seek to encourage the work and accomplishments of our members and to preserve the tradition, culture, and history of quilting. Rather than judge each other's work, we learn from it and revel in it.

All quilters, regardless of their interests or skill levels, are welcome.

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

11 am, first Saturday of each month (unless it's a holiday) at CrossPurpose, 3050 Richard Allen Court, Denver 80205

For more information, visit [www.washonaji.org](http://www.washonaji.org) or email [washonaji@gmail.com](mailto:washonaji@gmail.com)



Wa Shonaji's 2024 Retreat will take place October 10-13. A down payment of \$75 plus \$10 for insurance is due in April. Consider attending for lots of quilting, laughter, and camaraderie.

Thank you to all contributors as noted plus Stephanie Hobson, Monica Lynn, Linda White, Carolyn Somerville, Daryn Miller, Reniese Johnson, and "associate editor" Joanne Walton for their additions to this newsletter as well.