

November 1, 2019

"Are you still on about getting old?" Becca asked. "Because it's getting old."

"Very funny," I told her. "And yes, I'm a little touchy about it because I just signed up for Medicare."

"You must be really old," Becca said snidely. I thought I heard her chuckle.

"Don't laugh. Medicare is hard to figure out. You have all sorts of options and while all the plans are supposed to cover the same things within their alphabetical letter, everything carries widely different prices, and some plans are being discontinued, and other plans carry different names but are the same things as the alphabetical plans-those are the state plans, and you have to carry different cards, warn providers that you are now old and keep your fingers crossed that it all works. And that you made the best decision. That's a lot to ask of an old person who has trouble operating a GrandPad computer or the buttons on the steering column for her car."

Becca cocked her head.

"And I don't even have medical issues to worry about."

"You have fake knees."

"That's different."

"No it's not." "Yes it is." "No it's not." "Yes it is. Just wait till you have a hip replaced."

"Aussies have good bone structures & hips. They don't get hip dysplasia like humans do." I don't know how she knows these things, but she's right. Time

to change the subject. It's easy to distract a mini Aussie.

"Well, getting older is big business in our country. Lots of companies make products to help seniors navigate through life," I told her.

And, of course, there is an institute that studies this: The AgeLab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In order to feel what it is like to get old - okay for those of us who are old, we already know how it feels-you can don a suit that mimics what it feels like to be old. The suit is called AGNES, an acronym for Age Gain Now Empathy System, or a "sudden aging" suit, as the developer calls it.

The suit includes "yellow glasses, which convey a sense of the yellowing of the ocular lens that comes with age; a boxer's neck harness, which mimics the diminished mobility of the cervical spine; bands around the elbows, wrists, and knees to simulate stiffness; boots with foam padding to produce a loss of tactile feedback; and special gloves to reduce tactile acuity while adding resistance to finger movements." (New Yorker magazine, Can We Live Longer But Stay Younger, by Adam Gopnik, May 13, 2019)

Copnik donned the suit and the developer, Joseph Coughlin, told him to reach for a mug on the top shelf. Copnik wrote, it required more attention than expected. "You reach for the mug instead of just getting it. Your emotional cast, as focussed task piles on focussed task, becomes one of annoyance; you acquire the same set-mouthed, unhappy, watchful look you see on certain elderly people on the subway. The concentration that each act requires disrupts the flow of life, which you suddenly become aware is the happiness of life, the ceaseless flow of simple action and responses, choices all made simultaneously and mostly without effort. Happiness is absorption, and absorption is the opposite of willful attention.

"The annoyance, after a half hour or so in the suit, tips over into anger: *Damn, what's wrong with the world*? (Never: What's wrong with me?) The suit makes us aware not so much of the physical difficulties of old age, which can be manageable, but of the mental state disconcertingly associated with it-the price of age being perpetual aggravation." No wonder we get cranky sometimes.

I've always figured that if I lived in Ireland back when castles were popular, I'd be dead by now. Or, I'd be the blind granny, stuck in one room, hopefully with a southern view for sun warming, with one chair, where I would live, eat, potty & sleep my days away. I wouldn't be able to navigate the castle, because the stone knee knockers between rooms would be too high for me to

step over because I wouldn't have my replaced knees, only my arthritic ones. Plus I wouldn't be able to walk without tripping in the long skirts and voluminous petticoats-worn mostly to stay warm because Irish castles back in the day didn't have pellet stoves and radiant heat heaters. I also wouldn't be able to see anything because Peeper cheater glasses and bifocal contact lenses wouldn't have been invented yet. In other words, I'd be blind. I've been to an Irish castle. They are not user friendly.

Anyway, the AgeLab is designed to encourage new technologies & products to serve our aging population. Coughlin says, "Every eight seconds, a baby boomer turns seventy-three." That stat is depressing enough to make me want to start drinking. Heavily. But Copnik's story is a fascinating read, and I encourage you to find it on line.

So what the AgeLab does is engineer, design, develop and promote new products designed for us old folk. Which, as they put it, "Is a good way of going out of business." Old people don't want old people products. For example, in the 1950s, Heinz developed "senior foods," kinda like baby for the elderly. As Coughlin put it, it not only failed, it failed spectacularly. Go figure. The "I've fallen and can't get up" products are in this same category. The only people who want them are kids & they buy them for their parents, who won't wear them. Studies show the elderly would rather thrash around on the floor than call for help. Old people don't want to be reminded of their frailty. Consequently, we geezers are hard to market to because we won't buy products that remind us we're old.

Maybe that's why I don't have "reachers" that would allow me to change a lightbulb without climbing on a chair. I'd rather suffer in near darkness for as long as possible. Or why I buy cars with leather seats rather than purchase a cheap swivel thingy to ease the strain on the knees when getting in and out of the car. As Copnik put it, "We would rather suffer because we're old than accept that we're old and suffer less."

And you know this is true, because you do the same thing. How many times have you not asked for help in situations where help would really be nice. And we're not old. Yet.

So what products do work, or sell, for the elderly? Things like hearing aids that look like AirBuds (the newest in cool looking and easy to lose headphones) or smart watches that do more than just track how many steps you've taken. Young people use these devices, so we old people will fit right in.

Golf carts have become a cool accessory at senior living places. Fun to drive, cool to decorate. Microwave ovens weren't originally targeted to the older population, but they are perfect for us. Easy and quick to nuke something for dinner. Meals to order were designed to be more convenient for the very busy younger set, but they also fit the "assisted living" elderly group without screaming, "you're old." But marketers don't often think about our age group when it comes to these new "hip" products.

The housing market for seniors is impacted by all of this. Most people want to stay in their own home. It's where the memories are. But most houses are not designed around aging body complications: stairs, bath tubs, high ceilings, washer/dryers in the basement, beds and bathrooms upstairs. Coughlin stated in the article that if the problem of stairs can be solved, "We won't need new housing" like retirement homes or senior villages in Florida.

He said there are two simple questions to ask when thinking about where you want to live 'till you die: "Who's going to change the light bulb, and how are you going to get an ice-cream cone?" I think this man is a genius. You sometimes forget how important ice cream is, in the scheme of things.

We are already living much longer than in the days of Irish castles. We easily have 30 more years than even our parents. And I think this may all get worse over the next 30 years--or better, depending on how you look at it. If you read the rest of Copnik's article, it talks about the fact there may be no "death gene" in our gene pool, meaning death may not be inevitable. Scary? Exciting? Just think of how many quilts you will now be able to do in your "lifetime."

But for right now, what do we do with our extra 30 years or more of life? Sit around & wait for the inevitable? Coughlin said, "What we need is not to put off death a little longer but to write a new narrative of aging as it could be."

I like that. I still have places to see, books to read, quilts to invent, Becca to whip into shape. Lots to do. I'd like to do it all with new feet, but that product has yet to be invented. I'd buy new feet right now if they had them. Then I could wear Sketchers and look like all the youngsters out there. I would learn to work all the apps on my phone, I would study the latest in teen slang, I would learn to read & write emojis.

"Wait a minute," Becca said. "Just because you can do something, doesn't mean you should. Stay away from emojis. There are some things no one should over use."

She's right. As always.

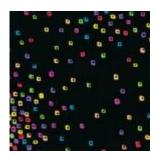
WHAT'S NEW!!

We have 3 bolts of bucking horse & rider fabrics, in the smaller horse: blue on blue, gold on brown and brown on gold. Last three bolts until May.

From Clothworks:





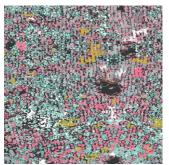




From AGF:









From Robert Kaufman:

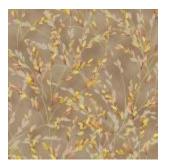


we got fat quarter bundles of the woven linens and Elizabeth Hartman's new collection called Adventure. And we got 3 of these kits of her newest pattern.

From Hoffman:





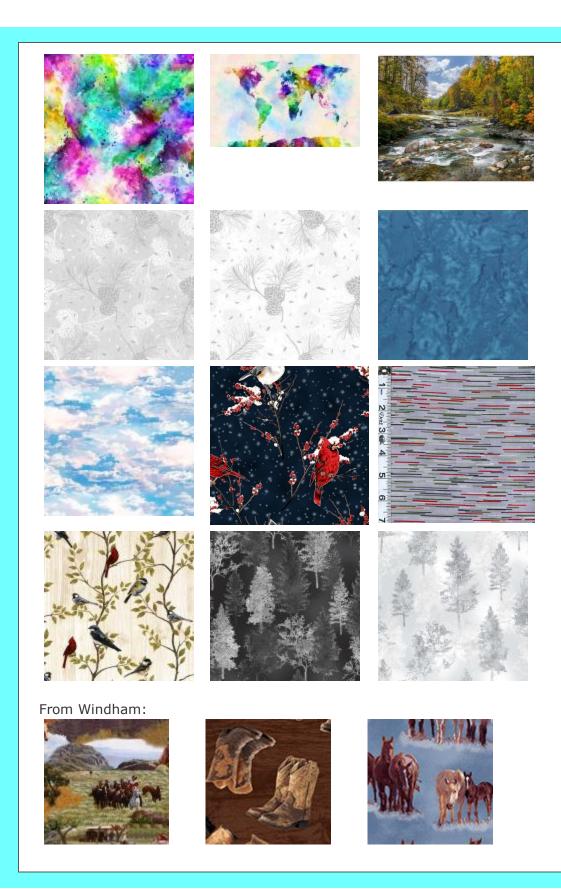




















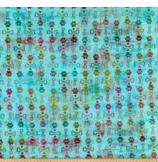


From 3 Wishes:









From Robert Kaufman and Kanvas:





SECTION MEASURES APPROX. 20" X 20"

From Moda:



These are linen



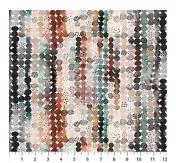
From Elizabeth Studios:







From Northcott:

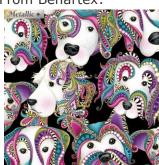








From Benartex:







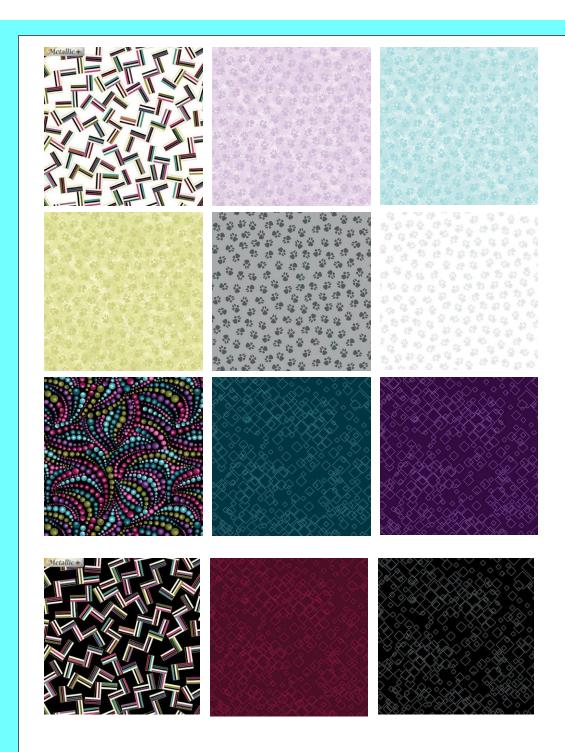
Metallic +

PANEL MEASURES APPROX. 24" X 44"



PANEL MEASURES APPROX. 24" X 44"





From Timeless Treasures:







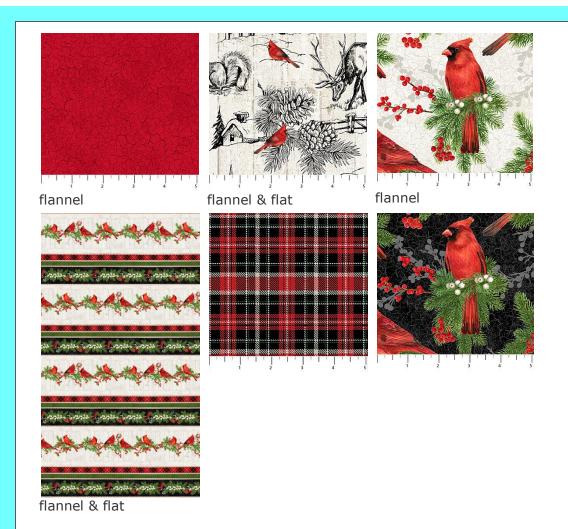
From Henry Glass:







From Northcott:



SIGN UP FOR LONG ARM QUILTING CLASSES TODAY!

Classes are on Wednesdays and some Saturdays: 10:30-1:30; 2:30-5:30, or 6-8:30. Check the calendar for dates. Only 4 to a class.

Rentals have started for those who have taken the class. Tuesdays and Fridays, and a couple of Saturday and Sunday rentals. Check the calendar for rentals. Generally, there are 2 rentals times per day:

10:30-2 and 2:30-6. \$25/hr or \$85 for 3 1/2 hours. \$50 minimum. Plus \$5/bobbin for thread. Most quilts (double and smaller), even for beginners, will take about 2 1/2-3 hours. We will discuss what you plan to do on your quilt and will help you estimate how long it will take.

Class descriptions follow the calendar, so keep scrolling. Classes are listed alphabetically, by month.

November 2019						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Color of the month: flannels					1 Long Arm Rental Day	2BOM 10:30 Gravity 1-4 Intro to Sashiko 4-6
3Closed	4 Fall Mystery Part 1	5 Hand work Club 2-4 Long Arm Rental Day	6 Long Arm Quilt classes 10:30-1:30; 2:30-5:30; OR 6-9	7 Churn Dash Flannel 1-4 Beginning Machine Quilting 6-9	8 Open sew 3-7 Long Arm Rental Day	9 Embroidery Club 10- noon Paper piece Christmas Tree 1-6
10 Beginning Quilt 1-4	Fall Mystery Part 2 Veterans Day	12 Hand work Club 2-4 Long Arm Rental Day	13 Long Arm Quilt classes 10:30-1:30 Knit Pickers' Club 3-7	14 Churn Dash Flannel 1-4 Beginning Machine Applique 6-9	15 Long Arm Rental Day	16 Boxy Tote Bag 10:30-4 AccuCut 4-6

17 Pillow Case Party 1-4	18 Fall Mystery Part 3 Triangle Frenzy 10:30-2	19 Hand work Club 2-4 Long Arm Rental Day	20 Knit Pickers' Club 3- 7	21 Machine Binding 1-4	22 Open sew 3-7 Long Arm Rental Day	Triangle Frenzy 10-1 Fab 40s sampler 1-5
24 Beginning Machine Quilting 1-4	25 Fall Mystery Part 4 English Paper Piecing 2-4	26 Hand work Club 2-4	27	28 Closed Thanksgiving Day	29 Black Friday Sale	30Shop Small Business Sale Boxy Tote Bag 1-6

December 2019							
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	
1 Closed	2	3 Hand work Club 2-4 Long Arm Rental Day	4 Long Arm Quilt classes 10:30-1:30; 2:30-5:30; OR 6-9	5 Dragon Quilt 10:30-4	6 Long Arm Rental Day	7BOM 10:30 Gravity 1-4 Long Arm Rental Day 3-6	
8	9 Intro to Wool Applique: Ornaments 1-4	Hand work Club 2-4 Long Arm Rental Day	11 Long Arm Quilt classes 10:30- 1:30 Knit Pickers' Club 3-7	12 Christmas Stockings 10:30-4 Full Moon	13 Open sew 3-7 Long Arm Rental Day	Embroidery Club 10- noon Triangle Frenzy 1-6	
15 Traditional Binding 1-4	16	Hand work Club 2-4 Long	18 Credit Card Holders 1-4	19	20 Long Arm Rental Day	21	

		Arm Rental Day				
22 AccuCut 1-4	23	24	25 Closed Christmas	26	27	28
29	30	31	Color of the month: red			

Please look on the calendars above for times and dates.

Ongoing Classes & Clubs

AccuCut Rental Sept 21, 4-6, Oct. 19, 4-6, Nov 16, 4-6, Dec 1-4 \$10/30 minutes We have an industrial size AccuCut cutter with several dies: strips, squares, triangles, rectangles. Sign up for time of the AccuCutter to change your stash into usable strips, squares, rectangles and triangles. We will rent to machine in ½ hour intervals (you can get a lot cut in ½ hour).

Block of the Month First Sat of month 10:30-11:15 FREE Barb Boyer

Join at any time. You get a free fat quarter if you come to class with the previous month's completed block. This year we're making a black &Y white + one color quilt. The challenge, if you choose to accept it, is work within the black & white palette (plus one color placed where ever you like). For the color choice, we are drawing paint chip cards, covered in newspaper so you can=t see what color you=re getting. But...if you don=t like the color you=ve drawn you can 1) swap with a neighbor, or 2) draw a new color. And if you just can=t bring yourself to work in neon green and no one will swap with you, you can just choose your own color.

Grandmother=**s Flower Garden, English Paper Piecing** last Monday of each month, 2-4 Barb Boyer \$20 (one time fee)

We will teach the basics of English Paper Piecing, the simple & easy way to hand piece. English paper piecing dates back to the early 1800s. It is a hand sewing method that uses paper templates to help sew complex angles together, like

hexagons. Any number of different designs can be made, including **Grandmother**=**s Flower Garden**C**this** is **the pattern we**=**re doing this year**. We will also show how to hand piece the traditional way, also, if you are interested.

Hand Embroidery Club2nd Sat. of the month, 10-noon FREE Kathy Sconce
If you want to learn to hand embroider or just brush up your technique, join us on
the second Saturday of the month from 10 to noon. You can work on your own
projects or you can join the project we are doing. This year we are following a
purchased pattern called Gardner=s Alphabet Quilt Block of the Month by
Crabapple Hill. We will explore a variety of embroidery stitches for each block each
block (2 letters per month), plus we will learn how to color with regular crayons to
enhance the blocks. Each month Kathy Sconce shows us a new stitch to try, plus,
she guides us through thread choices, how to knot, fabrics to use, and tracing
techniques.

Knit Pickers' Club 2nd and 4th Wed of each month, 3-7 Carol Moler

We are changing up the Knit Pickers= Club. We=re going to knit 2 days a month every second and fourth Wednesday, and we=ll start earlier in the day at 3. For those you you who work, we=ll still be knitting >till 7. The Club is open to all skill levels. We want to share what we've learned, find new patterns, and simply just sit and knit. We work on some felting projects, fingerless mittens, mittens, and socks. And we are working on a group projectBmeaning everyone does the same pattern. Each month we will learn a different pattern, make it into a square and eventually put all the squares into one projectBafghan, scarf, bag, etc.

Live Each Season Wool Applique Thurs: Sept 5, Oct 3, Barb Boyer \$20

This wool wall hanging has 4 rows: Spring, Summer, Fall & Winter. We started the project last year with the Winter row. We've done the Spring and the Summer and now it's onto Fall. You can join us for this last row, and then pick up the other rows is you want to do the entire wall hanging. You will learn wool applique, various embroider stitches, and how to add fun embellishments to your wall hanging.

Long Arm Quilting ClassesWednesdays from 10:30-1:30, 2:30-5:30 Barb Boyer \$30 (check calendar for specific times & dates)

In this class you will learn all about the Nolting long arm quilting machines: loading, threading, quilting. I=II demonstrate how to load and thread, set stitch length, change tension, wind and load bobbins. Then I will load a practice quilt onto the machine and show how to do hand guided quilting. Each student will be given at least 15-20 minutes of practice time. (Each class is limited to 4 students). You will be able to do free hand quilting plus you can practice following a pantograph. Any quilter who wants to rent to machines must take this class first, regardless of whether you have experience on a long arm machine. This class is not designed to teach you everything there is to know about long arm

quiltingBit=s just a start.

November Classes

Beginning Machine Applique Thurs Nov 6-9 \$25 Barb Boyer

So many quilts use applique these days. Learn the ins and outs of machine applique, from points to curves. We will practice the button hole/blanket stitch, satin stitch, and you can also play around with your decorative stitches. Threads, fusibles and stabilizers will be discussed.

Beginning Machine Quilting Thurs Nov 7, 6-9 or Nov 24, 1-4 \$25 Sue Frerich
Be prepared to quilt! You will practice your quilting skills on various samples,
using both your walking foot and darning foot. Batting, threads, needles and
patterns will be discussed. Who knows? By the time you leave you may even be
able to write/quilt your name!

Boxy Tote Bag Sat Nov 16, 10:30-4 and Nov 30, 1-6 \$25 Jean Korber

This adorable tote bag was designed to carry your small sewing machine, but it can be used for so many things. The Boxy Tote has pockets all the way around on the outside and inside! Heavy duty formed metal stays keep the bags mouth wide open, easy to get your Singer Featherweight sewing machine in and out. Jean has dissected the pattern and made it easy to follow.



Churn Dash Flannel Quilt Thur Nov 7 & 14, 1-4 \$20 Barb Boyer Three sizes of churn dash blocks make up this delightful flannel quilt. You need 14 fat quarters, but if you like our sample, we have 4 kits. The quilt is a little bigger than a lap size, bordering on twin, but you could add borders to make

it bigger. Perfect for our winter weather soon approaching.



Fall Mystery Quilt Mon Nov 4, 11, 18, 25 \$20 Barb Boyer

We have 6 Mystery kits-Once a week you will pick up instructions: Week 1, cutting,

Week 2 piecing, Week 3 piecing, etc. You won't know what it will look like until the very end. Don't worry, the pattern isn't hard, but we will keep you guessing as to what the final quilt will look like. And we've already made it up, so we know what it will look like, and trust us, it's a very cool fall colored quilt. You will only pick up your patterns each week; you will do your sewing at home.

Intro to Sashiko Sat Nov 2, 4-6 \$20 Kathy Sconce

Sashiko is a form of decorative reinforcement stitching from Japan. Traditional Sashiko embroidery used white thread on a blue background, but today's sashiko uses many colors of thread, including variegated, and a variety of different colored backgrounds. The main stitch is a type of running stitch and the patterns are often geometric. Learn the basic stitch in the intro class and make a small wall hanging, tea towel, or quilt.

Machine Applied Binding Thur Nov 21 1-4 \$20 Jean Korber

Jean will show you several ways to cut and apply binding, completely by machine. Then if you bring a small project, that is already quilted and ready for binding, you can use Jean's techniques and tricks to apply the binding to your project. You probably won't finish your binding, but you will get hands on experience so you can take what you've learned & finish at home.

Paper Pieced Christmas Tree Sat Nov 9, 1-6 \$20 Sue Frerich

We have several kits to make this wonderful black & white (plus a hint of red) Christmas tree. If you have not tried paper piecing, this is a perfect class to get you started. We will also have some individual patterns, so if you want to choose your own fabrics, you can do so. This quilt would look great hanging on the back of a door or on the wall for Christmas.



Pillow Case Party Sun. Nov 17 1-4 FREE

If you've never made a pillow case, or just want some time to sew a pillow case, this class is for you. This is a great mother/daughter styled class and pillow cases make great presents!

Triangle Frenzy, back again for the holidays Sat Nov 23, 10-1 \$20 Barb Boyer

This table runner uses a 10" border stripe and a 12" 60 degree ruler to cut large triangles then spin them around to arrange them in a swirling pattern. Simple & easy to do. You may even be able to make 2 during class.

December Classes

Binding Sun Dec 15 1-4 Barb Boyer \$20

You'll learn how to accurately cut you bindings, whether bias, cross or straightBand when to use which one. You'll

learn how to cut, the sew, join (so easy) and hand stitch part. Bindings so easy peasy you=II wonder why you were ever nervous about putting on the binding.



Learn to make pieced Christmas Stockings just in time to hang for Santa's arrival. These stockings can be as simple or complex as you want to make them. We'll talk about different lining and cuff options.

Credit Card Holders Wed Dec 18, 1-4 \$20 Barb Boyer

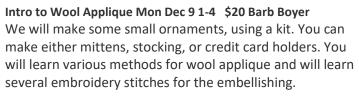
Make a fast, easy credit card holder that is lined with that special stuff that prevents hackers from stealing your info. Two fat quarters will make several card holders, or you could use a fat quarter and our cork fabric, to make an extra special card holder.

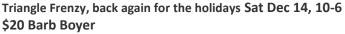


Dragon Quilt Thus Dec 5 10:30-4 \$20 Barb Boyer

In the Beginning has created this marvelous dragon fabric: in orange & flame colors, or cool blues & purples. The dragons are in a panel and there is a coordinating border stripe. The blocks are easy and the panel makes this quilt go together quickly. You will also learn how to miter the borders-a new skill to add to your toolbox!

Triangle Frenzy





This table runner uses a 10" border stripe and a 12" 60 degree ruler to cut large triangles then spin them around to arrange them in a swirling pattern. Simple & easy to do. You may even be able to make 2 during class.

Nolting Longarm Machines

Nolting has 5 main machines, each with different reaches: from 17" to 30" depending on the machine. They are sold with or without a frame, but after I saw & helped set up one of the steel frames this week, I recommend buying the frame. All machines, except for the Standard-the most economical machine-- have a stitch regulator. I recommend a stitch regulator. All machines can be equipped with a computer and there are a couple of different ones to choose from. In addition, you can get an extended table base so that you can use rulers, you can get larger bobbins on some of the models and on the frames you can get hydraulic lifts to raise and lower the tables. In the coming weeks, I will print out more information on each model.

The best entry level machine is the Fun Quilter. It comes in 17", 20" & 23" reach. It comes with the Intellistitch Equalizer stitch regulator, standard speed control, needle up/down, and fixed handles in the front & rear. This machine can also be equipped with a computer.

The Pro Machine has the Intellistitch Turbo stitch regulator, single stitch option, standard speed control, needle up/down and customizable

handles in the front & rear. The Pro Machine comes in 20", 24" and 30" reach with 10-12" of inside height. There are easy dials on the front to set stitch length and other options. This machine can also



be equipped with a computer.

The NV Machine is the newest in the fleet of Nolting machines. This machine has a touch screen with progra

mmable stitch regulation. You can stitch in 4 different stitch modes plus single stitch and needleup/down. It also has an adjustable brightness LED work light. This machine can also be equipped with a computer.



Nolting also has a commercial machine with the Intellistitch Equalizer stitch regulator, standard speed control, needle up/down, and fixed handles in the front & rear. This machine can also be equipped with a computer.

CLUBS

HAND EMBROIDERY CLUB-FREE!

If you want to learn to hand embroider or just brush up your technique, join us on the second Saturday of the month from 10 to noon. You can work on your own projects or you can join the project we are doing.

Hand Work Club-FREE!

Every Tuesday afternoon from 2-4, join us to just sit & hand stitch, crochet, bind, or knit group. Bring what you're working on, sit up at the table in front by the window and work on your projects for awhile. You can get advice & suggestions from your fellow quilters and share your experiences about your projects.

Knit Pickers' Club FREE!

This is another get-together class to sit & knit, work on our projects, share information and get some help. We will share techniques, suggest patterns, but mainly we'll sit & knit (or pick). We are discussing trying to do a group project-meaning everyone does the same pattern. Each month we will learn a different pattern, make it into a square and eventually put all the squares into one project-afghan, scarf, bag, etc. 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 3-7.

Block of the Month Club FREE!

First Saturday of the Month, 10:30-11:15. Join at any time. You get a free fat quarter if you come to class with the previous month's completed block. **Toad Toters Club** On full moon days (as noted in the calendar) you will get 20% off all purchases (not otherwise discounted) that you can fit in your bag. You must bring your bag to participate. Full Moon Days: September 11, October 13, November 12 December 12. Discount Policy We will honor only one discount -- whichever is largest. You can't combine a 10% with a 25% discount to get a 35% discount. On this we can't be bribed. Color of the Month August blacks, September orange, October green, November flannels, December red

Join the fun and come feel the difference of quality fabrics.

Happy quilting!

Sincerely, Barbara Boyer Around the Block 307-433-9555 www.aroundtheblockquilts.com