

The Quilter's Quill

A Roving Reporter Article

Have you noticed quilter's are really special people? I have noticed the special bond that women form when they realize they are talking with another quilter. The joy of stitching and companionship all rolled into one package can change lives and has many, many times. The volunteering for projects and working one on one with other women with similar interests forms bonds that last for years.

For instance, when I first moved to Mason City from Racine, Wisconsin, I felt bereft of friends. I had given up my quilt studio and many quilting friendships when I left Illinois to live in Racine with my sister after the loss of my husband. I never did find any quilt guilds in Racine during my year with her.

After my move to Mason City I was determined to create a new circle of friends and begin quilting again. A few months after I was settled in I found a quilt shop near where I live. I was able to obtain a contact name for the North Iowa Quilters Guild. However the piece of paper was small, and as small papers often do it got lost and was not even thought of much as I struggled to learn my way around the city and begin a new hobby/business.

It was summer time when I realized I had let several months go by without getting any closer to finding quilting friends. I had become friends with several women at the Convention and Visitors Bureau but, did not share many interests with them. The North Iowa Fair was in session and I talked my friend Don into taking me out to see if there were any quilts and handwork on display. Imagine my delight when I found not only quilts but also members of the local guild in attendance! I picked up a newsletter with all the information I needed and it was not long before I attended a meeting. I enjoyed the workshop and meeting so much I joined right away!

I have also read of women who beat depression and anxiety by quilting with friends. Someone else who was a quilter once asked me how non-quilters were able to make friends without the ability to network through quilt guilds. I am not sure but, I would assume the join PTA groups, church groups or the red hat society.

Letting newcomers know we are here can be a challenging proposition. Perhaps we could host a beginner's workshop on a weekend and invite interested non-members to come and enjoy our hospitality. One thing is for sure, creating a web site is a good step in the right direction. The Convention and visitors Bureau has agreed to place a link on their site to ours and we will soon be listed on the Iowa guild lists. However they find us we will welcome them with open arms as long awaited friends.