



The Notions Department

Coordinated by the Q.U.I.L.T.S. Programs Committee • Inspired by our members

Issue 1

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What is the feature you like best on your sewing machine?

Automatic or self threading feature - **Pat McGurn, Eileen Buel and Chris Kaczynski**

My favorite machine control is the up-down needle button. Not needing to manually raise/lower the needle saves me immeasurable time because the needle holds the fabric in place when I raise the presser foot. It also prevents the needle from losing its thread when sewing starts. - **Elaine McCain**

The 1/4 " foot. - **Sharon Nicpon**

I'm pretty old school with pretty old-school sewing machines, so I suppose the favorite "feature" is the bobbin winder. That extra functionality doesn't get appreciated enough! - **Kim Plofker**

I love my automatic threader. I have terrible vision so I wear contact lenses. However, despite being bifocal lenses, they make me positively cross-eyed when looking at things close-up! The auto threader makes it possible to quickly thread my needle without having to find my reading glasses. - **Lisa Wend**

I like the snipping of my thread. - **Eileen McCabe**

I guess the thing I like the best on my machine is the beautiful stitch it consistently makes. – **Barb Valachovic**

Have you ever had a quilting disaster? How did you handle it?

Making a quilt using 8 ½" squares along with square-in-a-square blocks. The color of the plain block was a deep purple with threadlike lines. I cut one side of many of these plain squares to 8". This was the end of that particular fabric, so I had to improvise. In my stash, I found a similar fabric in a dark brown. The color value of the brown was very close to the purple, so I used it, scattered throughout. No one noticed. They just thought it was part of the design. Disaster diverted! – **Pat McGurn**

When printing block designs from Jinny Beyer, I did not print them 100%. I completed every block before realizing that the lattice sashing didn't fit. I added a border to every block. After quilting, the mistake was not noticeable. - **Eileen Buel**

My worst quilting disaster was when I was well along piecing a quilt and discovered there was an error in the instructions between light and dark piece placement. I was a novice quilter and trusted the directions to be correct. The whole mess ended up in my UFO collection. - **Elaine McCain**

After putting a quilt top together, I noticed two of the blocks were pieced wrong. I left it that way because I was afraid I would ruin it more taking it apart. I don't think the person I gave it to noticed it and I certainly didn't say anything! Also, I have had to piece together different fabrics for backings unintentionally because I ran out of fabric. - **Sharon Nicpon**

So far, "disasters" have been on the minor and boring side, such as quilting a motif wrong or cutting a patchwork piece reversed. I just cuss a bit and do it over. - **Kim Plofker**

Usually not having right sided together (often!) - **Eileen McCabe**

My quilting disaster occurred when I tried to assemble my first "quilt as you go" blocks. My sashing was all cut on the crosswise grain, which I discovered only carefully measuring and inserting blocks at each intersection. I had to take out my little blocks, re-measure each piece with a firm stretch then sew in the block and continue like that for each of 24 blocks. I had to accept that the quilt would have these imperfections, but after all that work I am okay with how it turned out. You may be sure that in the future my sashing strips will be carefully cut on the lengthwise grain! - **Lucinda Robertson**

The one quilting disaster I had was when I was clipping threads on a quilt for the show, and I clipped the fabric! It was black so I took a magic marker and just hit it quick with that! - **Barb Valachovic**

How do you store your fabric?

I love to look at my fabric, all precisely folded and stacked according to color and/or types – cottons, flannels. Christmas has its own section. Most important, I make certain to limit direct exposure to sunlight, as the fabric can fade. When the season has me lucky enough to have my room full of sunshine, I use tension rods with heavier weight curtains hung on the bookcases. The added benefit is it keeps the fabric from getting dusty! This also goes for threads – I used to store them in decorative glass bottles (mason jars, etc.) I found the sunlight (or any bright light) could fade the thread and even make it brittle.

- **Lynne Kane**

I wrap my fabric on cardboard and stack them on shelves. Strips of fabric are hung on hangers, 2" squares are in a box and small scraps are put in a tub. I also have separate boxes for novelty prints and selvage strips. - **Latefa Lang**

I store my fabric in plastic bins. - **Kathy DelPrincipe**

If the fabrics are for a particular project, they are stored in a plastic see thru storage box. They are in my sewing room closet which is the largest closet in the house. Kim Diehl is stored separately. The regular colors are stored on the open shelves with their color - batiks are stored by themselves. - **Mary Ellen Tardiff**

I have a number of large plastic bins sorted by the color of the fabrics - for example, blues, reds, greens, etc. Having said that, I am transitioning to smaller scrap-booking boxes for projects, fabric color-ways, and newly purchased inspiration fabrics (in other words, impulse buys!) because the boxes are semi-transparent and smaller and easier to stack.

- **Elaine McCain**

I store my fabric by projects (having all the fabric & pattern required for a project together in a clear storage container), fat quarters sorted by color in a see-through storage container, having scraps sorted by color in a see-through container and yardage sorted by Christmas & all else in other storage containers.

- **Linda Tripoli**

I store most of my fabric in plastic bins. - **Chris Kaczynski**

In a barrister's cabinet and some plastic bins. - **Patricia McGurn**

I have a small stash which I keep in plastic boxes in the cabinet under my cutting table. - **Paula Dunn**

I store my fabric in stacks by color (hopefully!) on metal shelving units and older fabrics in plastic bins. Kits ready to be sewed are in those ArtBin cases with handles. In other words, too much fabric in my stash!

- **Marianne Blanchard**

I try to store in bins or on shelves, all layer cakes together, all jelly rolls together, etc.

- **Frankie Scheufler**



I store the majority of my fabric by colors but I also have a section that I call my international section where I keep my fabric from Australia, France, Indonesia, etc. There is also a section for fabrics that are coordinated for the next project. – **Linda Cary**

I'll have most of my fabric in bins. Some of my bins have been sorted by color, some are not, which proves to be very impractical when you have to try to find something or even remember what you have. I need to work more on scraps quilts just to use up some of my fabric. – **Cindy Ryan**

I store my fabric in cabinets. Some are sorted by subject: Xmas, children, holiday, panels, 108" wide, flannel, others. - **Eileen McCabe**

After being the Kids' Comfort Quilt Coordinator for 12-15 years, I have come up with a fabric organizational system that I find to be very efficient. It works well for making quilts from any pattern that gives you fabric length requirements, and works well for a large stash!

1. I immediately measure any fabric I get, and pin a scrap of paper with the measurement in both yards and inches on it. (Tape can leave residue over the years.)
2. I sort fabrics by length. This way if I need 3 yards, I don't even have to look at anything smaller.
3. I keep my sorted fabrics in boxes, bins, on shelves, or whatever storage I have available at the time. All boxes, bins, or shelves are well labeled, so again, I don't have to touch anything I don't need.
4. I keep the fabric stacked inside the boxes/bins so all the fabric shows. I lay the box/bin on its end, and insert the fabrics as I would onto a shelf. Then when the box/bin is placed back on its bottom, all the fabrics show. Again, I only have to pull out the fabrics I might use, rather than all of them.
5. I sort scraps and small pieces by color. That seems to be how I need them most often. - **Emily Spooner**

Carefully folded in large plastic containers. I store washed and unwashed fabrics separately. - **Sheila McGlin**

I store most of my fabrics on the shelves of my book cases, 3 so far, would love to have the room for more though. What doesn't fit on the shelf then goes into clear plastic storage. I separate by color or holiday. Also, batiks stay together, separate from cotton. Also very important: NO direct sun shining on my fabrics! - **Ingrit Cassimore**

I store my fabric in an entertainment center (mostly larger yardage of fabric on shelves by color), in a dresser (smaller pieces of fabric by color) and in a small closet with Closetmaid shelves (Christmas fabric). - **Barbara Valachovic**

My storage keeps evolving as my stash changes. I keep things in families, then by color. My "families" are flannel, batik, and cottons. Then broken down a little more by grunge, Tula Pink, Allison Glass lines, and patriotic. Of course then there are the Fat Quarters...they are in color groups. You might call it organized chaos but for me it works. - **Deborah Kreifels**

I store my fabric on shelves in a large closet by color. Backing fabrics are together as are my baby fabrics used for church dedication quilts. - **Jan Palombo**

I store my fabric in clear plastic bins of different sizes so I can see what is in them when I am looking for something in particular. I can also take a quick inventory of what I have when I know I am going fabric shopping. I don't have a lot of storage space, just some shelves in a small closet, so I don't have a huge stash. I also have smaller containers to put all of one project in to keep the pattern, fabrics and threads I need in one spot and ready to sew! - **Sharon Nicpon**

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I store my fabric in plastic bins (loosely covered) by fabric type (i.e. cotton, flannel, Home Dec., felt, denim, etc.). I also sort cotton by color or novelty. - **Maryann McDermott**

I store my fabric in large clear plastic boxes which really need to be organized better. except fat quarters that are in separate box. - **Marie Barker**

I store fabric in a cabinet, an antique trunk and some plastic bins. - **Debbie Cieslak**

I store my precuts on shelves and in dresser drawers. My yardage is wrapped around comic boards and stored on shelves or in cloth-lined baskets or canvas totes. My scraps are piled together in one big canvas tote until I have time to sort them in some way. - **Lisa Wend**

What phase of quilt making do you enjoy the most?

I enjoy machine appliqué and paper piecing. - **Latefa Lang**

I enjoy the design and construction of the quilt. – **Kathy DelPrincipe**

All of it. Sewing quilts, making table runners and things like that. And love appliqué, needle turn appliqué and appliqué on wool. - **Mary Ellen Tardiff**

My favorite phase of quilt making is definitely making the tops. I like the magic of seeing the design come together, evolving into something new and different by way of the fabric choices I make. - **Elaine McCain**

I enjoy the challenge of piecing the most. - **Linda Tripoli**

My favorite part of quilting is hand quilting the quilt, followed by the planning, doing the math and choosing the fabric. - **Chris Kaczynski**

Picking out the fabrics and pattern, cutting, piecing, and binding. – **Patricia McGurn**

The phase of quilt making I think I like most is the cutting. It is the excitement of starting a new project. I also like the hand sewing of the binding. It is relaxing as I spread the quilt on my lap on a cool evening. - **Paula Dunn**

I enjoy picking fabric and colors and the piecing of blocks. - **Marianne Blanchard**

I can't believe it but hand sewing the binding and labels on the back. - **Eileen McCabe**

I enjoy putting the tops together the most. If someone finished it up I would be very happy. LOL. - **Frankie Scheufler**

Love all phases of quilting ... except for binding. - **Linda Cary**

I have to say I enjoy piecing blocks since once you're done with a block you feel you've accomplished something. I've always enjoyed machine appliqué since they look like pictures. Love doing wall hangings. I also found that I enjoy doing EPP [English Paper Piecing] blocks. I'm really new to this but have learned how to hand piece the blocks without thread showing and how to make a Nicker knot. Lol. I'm having so much fun with the Smitten pattern. It takes a lot of blocks and I think I'm only half way through but I'm excited to see what the final product will look like once I start sewing the blocks together. - **Cindy Ryan**

Designing a quilt. - **Emily Spooner**

I think the initial design and color choices. – **Sheila McGlin**

I love the process of piecing quilts, by machine, but procrastinate when it comes to sandwiching. - **Ingrit Cassimore**



I absolutely love selecting fabrics. My favorite part of quilt making - **Barbara Valachovic**

I like piecing and seeing how the colors go together. - **Debbie Cieslak**

My favorite part of the quilting process is piecing. It's like a fun puzzle to me. – **Deborah Kreifels**

I enjoy appliqué the most. Hand sewing is a relaxing, peaceful pastime. - **Jan Palombo**

I absolutely love choosing the fabrics for a quilt I am planning to make. I mix and match fabric lines and usually use something from my stash with newly purchased fabric. - **Sharon Nicpon**

My favorite phase of quilting is picking out the fabrics that I want in my quilt...which sometimes means I just have to go shopping for it! - **Kathy Lenic**

I have to admit I enjoy all aspects of quilting but mostly like designing quilts and second on the list is taking classes to discover new ways to streamline the process of making the quilt. - **Kristen Lauster**

I like to piece especially when all those points come together well. I enjoy free-motion quilting when I can take the time and practice by skills. - **Maryann McDermott**

I enjoy designing, then piecing and then planning the next. - **Marie Barker**

The phase of quilt making that I enjoy the most is ironing and cutting the fabric. I think it's the anticipation of embarking on a new project that appeals to me. My excitement and motivation is at its highest at that point. - **Lisa Wend**

Would you like to hear our members' notions about a particular quilting topic?

Email your ideas to the Programs Committee at QUILTSPROGRAMS@gmail.com!

