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Mon-Wed 10-5:30 ★ Thurs 10-7 ★ Fri-Sat 10-5 ★ Sun 1-4

Sales & Service **PFAFF**

April - July 2011

Dear Friends:

Are you as excited for spring as I am? It seems everyone who has come in this week is talking about it! We're all in the mood for sunshine, warm days, thunderstorms, and flowers. Our new spring fabrics evoke all those warm feelings....if you haven't been in, do stop by and check out our "local color."

Looking for a good way to display your wall hangings? We have two hangers that showcase a quilt without any visible hardware. The Magnet-Ficent can be mounted on nearly any surface using 3M adhesive strips, while the "Hang-it Dang-it" is a self-leveling pole that hangs on a single nail. It can't get any easier! Both have gotten great reviews from our customers.

By now you've no doubt heard "chatter" about the rising price of cotton and its impact on the fabric industry. For an understanding of what's causing this increase, as well as a comparison to general inflation, read the excellent article (published by American Quilt Retailer and reprinted with permission) on page 3 of this newsletter.

Thank you to all who continue to bring in the fabric and quilting supplies they don't plan to use. These items are distributed (through the hard work of several local quilters) to various state-wide entities that feature quilting programs for women experiencing economic difficulties, the incarcerated, charity quilt-making, etc. Your generosity is much appreciated. We have been asked to remind everyone that your discarded clothing cannot be used, so please find another outlet for recycling anything except 100% cotton quilting fabric.

Happy Quilting!

Connie & the other "good eggs" at Creekside



Mark these dates...

➔ **Block of the Month**

Apr 2-3 May 7-31 Jun 4-30

➔ **CLOSED**

Sun, April 24 (Easter)
Mon, May 30 (Memorial Day)
Mon, July 4

➔ **OTHER HOLIDAY HOURS**

Early close at 3:00 on
Good Friday, April 22

2011 Central Iowa Scavenger Hunt Update

We hope you enjoyed the fun and found some great bargains while participating in our recent Central Iowa Scavenger Hunt held March 24-26. The Grand Prize went to Sue O'Donnell of Colo, whose entry was drawn from those who found the correct answer to every clue at every store. She received a certificate for 5 yards of fabric from all five stores.

Each store also drew an entry from those who had the correct answers for that store's clues. These lucky quilters took home a \$75 gift basket: Wanda Birkestrand (Adel Quilting & Dry Goods), Jennifer Pierce (Creekside Quilting), Shirley Taylor (Quilting Connection), Lynn Koester (The Quilt Block), and Teresa Spaur (Quilter's Cupboard).

Congratulations to the winners and thanks to all who played!



Welcome, Ann!

We're thrilled to welcome Ann to the Creekside team. She joined us in February and will be here every Friday as well as some weekend days.

She's looking forward to meeting you, so stop in when you can.

At the same time, we were sad to say goodbye to Marge, who left after more than 7 years with us. We'll miss her!

Love, Live & Laugh

by b.j. Designs

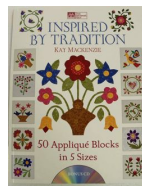
Talent must run in this family! The latest pattern from Barbara Jones' company was actually designed by her 10-year-old granddaughter Anna who had an egg-sized brain tumor removed in August, 2010. Part



of the proceeds from the sale of this pattern will go to a fund for Anna's medical expenses.

We'll have kits of the fabrics used in our sample (made by Patty).

NEW BOOKS



Inspired by Tradition by Kay Mackenzie
Features 50 applique blocks in 5 sizes from 6" to 12". Includes color photos of each block, line drawings, and a CD. Appliquers will want this in their library! \$22.99

Simply Charming by Tara Lynn Darr
Twenty tiny treasures reminiscent of reproduction quilts, all of which can be made with 5" charm squares or smaller scraps. \$26.95



OTHER NEW TITLES ♦ Sisterhood: A Quilting Tradition ♦ Quilts from Textured Solids by Kim Schaefer ♦ Wonky One-Block Quilts ♦ French Braid Transformation ♦ 501 Quilting Motifs ♦ Garden Club by Blackbird Designs ♦ 15 3-Hour Mini Projects by Sue Spargo ♦ Custom Curves by Karen McTavish

NEW FABRIC

...in the store or coming soon

- ★ American Valor fabrics from various companies (see Page 5)
- ★ Full Circle by Kathy Schmitz (Moda)
- ★ Sweet Sixteen - batiks & prints by Laundry Basket Quilts (Moda)
- ★ Imperial Collection (Robert Kaufman)
- ★ Grinch (new Dr. Seuss group from Robt Kaufman)
- ★ Clermont Farms by Minnick & Simpson (Moda)
- ★ Grace by 3 Sisters (Moda)
- ★ Winter Solstice by Jason Yenter (In the Beginning)
- ★ Holiday Celebrations by Laurel Burch (Clothworks)
- ★ Holiday Flourish (Robert Kaufman)
- ★ Ready Set Snow by Me & My Sister (Moda)
- ★ new reproduction groups by Jo Morton (Andover)
- ★ Reindeer Games by Sandy Gervais (Moda)



Check out the new assortment of cookbooks for wraps, cookies, and other goodies.



Give your machine the TLC it deserves with this vac attachment. Use it on all your electronics. \$18.75



Make this 66" square quilt using the new Twister template (\$19.50) and patterns from the Let's Twist book (\$18). It's a beauty! sample by Ginny



Stars of Glory
wool table runner or door hanging
pattern \$8; kit \$34.99

reprinted and back in stock. Dr. Seuss Cat in the Hat fabric.



Wondering what's up with cotton prices?

by Jim Salinas, sales associate for Moda Fabrics
edited by Susan Fuquay, publisher *American Quilt Retailer*

The following article has been reprinted with permission from American Quilt Retailer, Vol. 17, Issue 97, January 2011.

If you are wondering what is behind the recent increase in the retail prices of your quilting cottons, here is a brief explanation to help you understand the situation.

Cotton is a commodity and like all commodities prices are increasing. Most would attribute this primarily to the weakening dollar. As confidence in the dollar erodes, commodities rise in value. The dollar has weakened, of course, as our national debt has skyrocketed. Premium fabric brands are printed in Japan and Korea. The dollar has weakened by approximately 20 percent to these countries' currencies.

We are also wrestling with a worldwide cotton shortage. This shortage is exacerbated by flooding in Pakistan, heavy rains in China and hail damage in west Texas. India has stopped the exportation of cotton altogether, and China has severely restricted its cotton exportation because rising wealth is boosting consumption in their own country. Labor shortages in China have also contributed to the reduction in available cotton. Indeed, the entire globe is competing for a finite amount of product. As is sometimes the case, when commodities spike in price, speculators hold out for better prices, and it appears that is what some greige goods producers may be doing.

Historically, when cotton prices would rise dramatically, mills could blend their way to a cheaper product. The quilting culture simply does not support a blended product, not to mention the fact that polyester (a petroleum derivative) prices are also rising.

Truly we are dealing with a "perfect storm" of problems when it comes to fabric costs. The quilting industry is also dealing with a significant decrease in the number of print mills that can print the smaller minimums our industry requires, as well as the 16 to 18 screens so frequently used. There were once approximately 25 printers that could do this type of work; we are down to 10 now! This puts upward pressure on printing costs. We still have six mills left in America, but they produce carpet, upholstery, etc. They may do some high speed rotary printing, but with large minimums and only four to six screens. They do not do low minimum flat bed press printing using 18 screens.

As if this weren't enough, the industry is also dealing with two other issues. As the cost of greige goods (fabric before it is printed) increases, the duty on these goods also increases. Last but not least, UPS shipping costs are increasing 4.9 percent in January 2011! Wow! The perfect storm indeed!

Stephanie Dell'olio, president, retail division of Marcus Bros., recently exclaimed, "We have experienced shortages in the past, but this particular set of conditions is like no other we have ever experienced in our 100-year history."

One reason these price hikes are creating so much consternation is that we have experienced so little inflation in the fabric industry over the last 20 years. My wife, Roxanne, took quilting classes when we lived in Phoenix 20 years ago. She was paying \$6.99 per yard for Hoffman of California prints. The industry was much smaller then, and Hoffman was considered (as it still is today) a premier brand. Today Hoffman prints are \$9.99 per yard many quilt shops. This is only a 44 percent increase in 20 years!

In 1990 a loaf of bread was .70. In 2010 a comparable loaf was \$2.69. That's a 284 percent increase. The average cost of a new car in 1990 was \$16,900. In 2010 the average price of a new car was \$27,000. This is 65 percent increase. One pound of ground beef was .89 in 1990. In 2010 a pound of ground beef was \$3.29. This is a 270 percent increase.

You can look at just about anything you purchase and if you compare the price of that item in 1990 to the price today you may just find quilting cotton is a still a good value worth the joy it brings you!

Jim Salinas has close to 40 years of experience in the fabric industry. He was a store manager and then district manager with Hancock Fabrics for 17 years and later vice president of marketing for Cloth World, director of fabric merchandising for Michael's Arts and Crafts and executive vice president of House of Fabrics. He has been a sales associate for Moda Fabrics since 1997.

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The Creekside promise

We'll continue to do our best to bring you beautiful high-quality fabric that will do justice to your quilts and to continue to offer value through our punch-card program, coupons, sales, and personalized assistance with your quilt planning.

Quilts of Valor update

In our last newsletter, we told you about Connie's opportunity to participate in a trial run of "Under Our Wings," a program developed by Marianne Fons that would pair an experienced quilter with a "rookie" who was interested in making a quilt to be donated to a wounded serviceman or woman through the Quilts of Valor organization.

Coaches (the experienced quilters) bring the sewing machine, quilting tools (cutter, etc.), and provide the guidance to the rookie as (s)he constructs a quilt top. The rookie provides the fabric (unless you wish to donate it). Machine quilting of the completed top can be done by a volunteer arranged through Quilts of Valor; after quilting, the coach and rookie reunite for a hands-on binding lesson.

For more information, visit the Quilts of Valor website (using the link on our homepage) for free patterns and other information about the program.....or, if you would like to be a coach and can attend a one-hour meeting here at the store on Sat, May 7, at 10:00, just call to let us know you're coming. At the meeting, we can walk you through the process or, if there's interest, we would love to sponsor a sew-in for a group of coaches and rookies to work together on their Quilts of Valor.

Moda fabrics is sponsoring a spin-off program called **Just One Star**. Read about their effort to piece, quilt, and bind 100 quilts in 100 days (by Flag Day, June 14, 2011) using the link on our homepage.

They are asking quilters to take a few minutes to piece "just one star" (using the pattern on their website) in a medium red or blue on a cream background. Blocks can be sent directly to Moda at

the address on their website. **If you'd like, bring it in to us and we'll send a box with all our blocks.** Moda will then coordinate the finishing and donation of the 100 quilts thru the Semper Fi Fund. Note that blocks must arrive at Moda by May 1, so we'll be sending our box on Tuesday, April 26; if you'd like us to include yours, please have it here by 5:30 Monday.

Doesn't it just feel good to be part of this national group of quilters, who continue to give and give and give, every time they're asked to help with a worthy cause? I always feel so humbled to be able to do something small that will contribute to an effort that can really be life-changing for the recipient.

We got lucky! We received two of the remaining stock of the popular Expression 2.0, a fully-electronic machine at under \$1000! Don't delay.....come in and take yours home today.



PFAFF

Summer Breeze

This quilt (based on a pattern called Lexington) was done from an earlier line of Moda fabric. When we saw the similar blue and yellow florals of *Summer Breeze*, we knew we had to have it. Pick up your layer cake and the two yards (for sashing and binding) before it's gone.



APPLIQUE

Machine Applique Basics with Patty Barrett
Wed, June 1 - 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Lose your fear of applique! In this technique class, Patty will help you master machine applique using the fusible-web method. You'll love the results! \$20-no pattern required

Beginning Needleturn Applique with Angela Lawrence
Thurs, June 30 & July 7 - 10 to Noon OR 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Have you always admired the beautiful applique quilts but weren't sure how to begin? Angela will teach you all the basics as you make a block suitable for use in a sampler quilt or as a medallion for a wall hanging. \$32 plus pattern

BEGINNING-TO-QUILT SERIES

Accurate Rotary Cutting with Connie Doern
Wed, May 4 - 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Before you take a piecing class, learn the basics of rulers, rotary cutters, and accurate and safe cutting techniques. We'll teach you to follow typical cutting instructions for strip piecing. (Pre-requisite to other classes in this series.) \$20-no pattern required

Turning Twenty with Connie Doern
Wed, May 18 and 25 - 6:30 to 8:30 PM

This is a great pattern that's both super simple and so pretty that quilters of all levels enjoy making it. You'll learn basic piecing skills and how to follow a quilt pattern. You'll end up with a top worth quilting! *(Please note: You must take the Accurate Rotary Cutting class before this class unless you already have rotary-cutting skills.)* \$30 plus book

Binding Basics with Connie Doern
Mon, June 13 - 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Learn to prepare your binding strips, attach them, and turn mitered corners. Every beginner needs this class to give their quilts the finish they deserve. Don't let a sloppy binding detract from your quilt! \$15-no pattern required

QUILTING & FINISHING

Template-Free Free-Motion Machine Quilting with Patty
Sat, June 4 - 12:30 to 3:30 PM

Advance your machine-quilting skills and discover the fun, freedom, and beauty of free-motion quilting without premarking your top. You'll learn many designs and how to move gracefully from one to another. \$25-no pattern required

Machine Quilting with Lynn Witzenburg
Sat, May 14 OR Sat, June 25 - 10:00 to 4:00

Overcome your fear of working with a large quilt on your home sewing machine! You'll learn how to pin-baste the quilt, how to use your walking foot for straight-line quilting, and the techniques used in free-motion quilting. After the class, you'll be ready to actually *complete* one of those tops you've finished! \$45

Long-Arm Machine Certification with Jeanne Stilley
Sat, May 21 - 10:00 to 1:00

Learn to use our long-arm in this 2-part class. In the 1st session, you'll learn to wind and load a bobbin, thread the machine, load the quilt, and operate the controls. If you want to become certified for rental, you'll need a second one-on-one session with the instructor to prepare for your "solo flight." Session 1-\$65; Session 2- \$100 for 4 hours of practice (by appointment.)

OTHER TECHNIQUES & PROJECTS

Paper Piecing with Sharon Meisenheimer
Mon, May 23 - 1:00 to 3:30 PM

Enjoy the fun and accuracy of paper piecing! Sharp points and perfect pieces will be yours with this easy technique that can be used for blocks of all sizes. \$25

Mini Paper Piecing with Sharon Meisenheimer
Mon, May 23 - 6:00 to 8:30 PM

Have you been admiring those tiny pieced blocks that look impossible? They may have been paper pieced! Join us as we explore the technique and the fun of those tiny blocks for your next miniature quilt. \$25

Wool Applique with Patty Barrett
Sat, June 11 - 10:00 to 12:30

Whether you've worked with wool applique or not, this class is for you! You'll learn the techniques and stitches while working on either a pin keeper or the 12" square *Arrowroot* table topper. \$20 plus pattern

Folded Fabric Flowers with Sharon Meisenheimer
Mon, Apr 11 OR Mon, May 9 - 1:00 to 3:00 PM

Experience the fun of origami (paper folding) with fabric for a great new way to make flowers that can be used to add three-dimensional spice to your quilts. \$20 plus book