



2023 HVQ Guild President, Deonn Stott

I am thrilled to be part of Heber Valley Quilters. When I attended my first meeting in 2003, I had no idea how it would shape my life, and the life of my family. I have come to love every aspect of quilting. I dream about it at night, and can't wait to get up and get quilting!

I grew up on a small farm in Southeast Idaho in a town called Sunnyside, I'm the oldest of 11 kids; eight girls and three boys. Dad was a school teacher and Mom stayed at home wrangling us kids. We had one cow for milk, chickens, a horse or two, pigs, cats, and a dog every once in a while. Dad would hunt for our meat and we had a big garden. They taught us the value of hard work and the joy of making do. My Grandma who lived nearby often "had a quilt on" and would invite friends, neighbors and relatives over to hand-quilt large tricor wedding quilts. My sisters and I would play under the quilt frames, and I couldn't wait to "help". I also remember visiting my Great-Grandma Hoopes in my Dad's hometown in

Star Valley, Wyoming, and seeing her little black sewing machine set up on her back porch just outside the kitchen door. There was a little pot-bellied stove out there that she kept stoked with coal to keep warm, and little piles of fabric squares always waiting to be sewn together. She was one of the town's quilters for about 50 years, collecting people's scraps and making quilt tops for Relief Society groups to hand-quilt. She lived on the same street as Jane Leaphart's Aunt Vilate, and I am sure that they quilted together over at the church! Quilting really stitches us together, doesn't it? Side note: When I was 16, I had a crush on a kid from Star Valley who turned out to be Jane's cousin!

Quilts at our house were tied. Big hunks of gingham were sewn together, then we could choose the color of yarn to tie them together through the fluffy batting. I was about eight years old when I helped to tie my first quilt. I wanted to learn to sew on Mom's sewing machine, but had to wait until I was old enough to join 4-H. I was a little frustrated that the first project was to hem a dishtowel by hand. But finally, about age 11, I made my first outfit I could wear to school, a straight skirt with an elastic waist, and a peasant blouse with an elastic neckline. My sisters, Renee and Annette and I were super close in age - Renee was born 11 months after me, and Annette was born the week before I turned two. "Irish triplets!" Mom dressed us in matching outfits sometimes - same pattern, different colors. We often hung out with Mom in the sewing room, making Barbie clothes, Christmas gifts and 4-H projects for the fair.



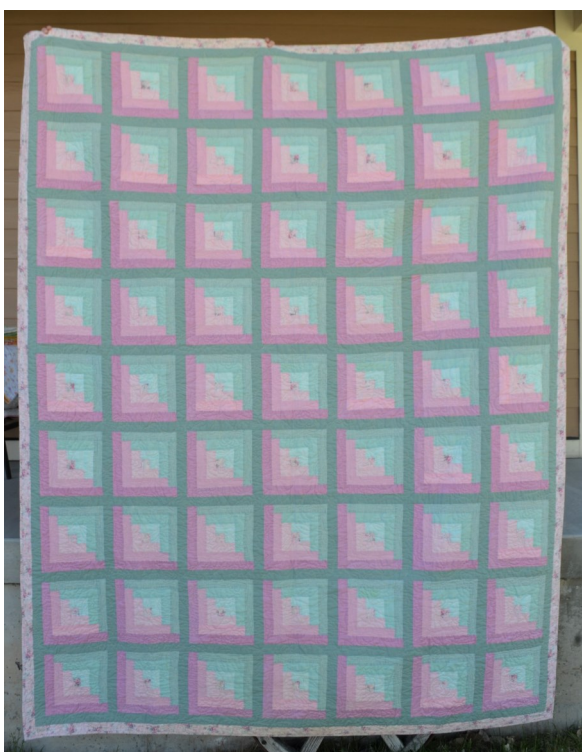
The sewing room was the gathering place. Some of my favorite memories were in that room. Like the night my Prom date arrived and I was still missing a sleeve and a hem on my dress!!! Mortifying! But my date just hung out with Dad downstairs, playing

on a guitar while he waited. My sisters teased me and thought it was funny. It's fun to look back and laugh now, but I was mortified! However, the dress turned out to be so cute, and that date was one of my most favorite ever.

I moved to Salt Lake in 1980 after graduating from Ricks College with an Associate's degree to find me a "City Boy" and someday join that big choir downtown. I got a job at the Bank of Utah, then at American Investment Bank, and it wasn't long before I found my honey, and our children arrived soon afterward. Our son Jordan was two years old when his triplet sisters, Lauren, Nicole and Chelsea arrived. When the ultrasound found a third baby, I giggled hysterically, and my husband about fainted. Then I remembered my own upbringing, and quickly realized that it would all be ok, because I wasn't doing it alone - I had a gem of a partner by my side. And, luckily, my HMO insurance covered my 40-day stay in the hospital, as well as our babies' 3, 4 and 5-week stays too. Evan was truly a lifesaver, and helped and supported me in my quest for sanity while rearing so many same-age kids. Still does. I used every skill I ever learned in my Family Living classes in college - Family Finance, Food Prep and Storage, Nutrition, Consumer Science, Interior Design, Dress Construction and Design, even Furniture Finish & Upholstery classes. But I especially loved making clothes and costumes for all four of my kids, until they asked me not to...



When they were old enough, I enrolled my children in 4-H Summer Sewing Camp—even my son—with Debbie Proctor, the USU Extension Agent for Wasatch County. It was always a highlight of our summers. Debbie helped teach my kids to sew, while I helped teach other kids at camp. Sometimes that is easier!



This was around the time that my mother died of a very aggressive type of cancer, adrenocortical carcinoma. She went in to check that cough that just wouldn't go away, and within eight days after her diagnosis, she was gone. She was 59. My sisters and I cleaned out her sewing room and found a bag with 14 pieced log cabin blocks, plus all the strips cut and ready to make her first pieced quilt for her newly redecorated bedroom. I brought home the bag, and started sewing the rest of the blocks together, trying to match that skinny little seam she had used in the other blocks, and crying with every stitch. It was therapeutic and took me through all the stages of grief. A sister found 7 more blocks and sent those to me, and over time I put together the quilt and gave it to my Dad for Christmas. I was hooked! What would have been Mom's first pieced quilt became my first pieced quilt. I learned a lot of things while making the quilt, and I'll always credit my Mother with teaching me how to sew a precise 1/4-inch seam allowance. The quilt is now back in my possession after my Dad's passing.

Whimsy's Cottage was a sweet little quilt shop on Main Street in Heber City, and I signed up for their "Block of the Month" club. My first block was a failure - I didn't pay attention to the seam allowance and learned that the edge of my foot was in fact NOT 1/4" but 3/8". I started over, remembering Momma's seam allowance, and made my second quilt. Then I joined two classes at Stitching Corner in Salt Lake, joined the local quilt guild, and made a quilt from a magazine for my son, kick-started by a row of Friendship blocks made by guild members in my first Friendship Block Exchange experience.



The next year, I signed up all three of my girls for Whimsy's Block of the Month program, and we sewed our blocks together. I'd pin and press, and the girls sewed and finished their first quilts. Their Grandma Mickie came over to teach them how to tie their quilts, and thus it began.

I've always had a sewing room in my home, no matter where we lived, and



it too has become the gathering place for my family just as it was for me as a kid. My son knows his way around a sewing machine, as well! But it has been especially meaningful for my girls. Two of them really struggled in school, but sewing and quilting put everyone on equal ground. Each of the girls could achieve the same level of success in the sewing room. Each of them continues to sew and make things and have become accomplished quilters themselves. I love it when one of them says, "Hmm, I need make a quilt."

The first time that the girls and I needed to have our quilting done by someone else in time for the county fair, it was a shocker! Writing that check to the longarm quilter was painful! But it planted the seed in my mind to obtain a machine of my own. In 2005, I attended the Home Machine Quilting Show in Salt Lake, test-drove different models, then was about to purchase a Handi-Quilter machine, when I when I paused, took a breath, and walked around the show again. I found someone selling her used Gammill, and decided to go with that one instead. I took a loan out on the car and we brought the machine home, and Quiltsapes was born. I haven't looked back since then. I thought it would be a great skill for the girls to learn, but the machine was the first one in the valley and was rarely available for me to teach them to use it! They've each dabbled with free-motion quilting, but now that both machines are computerized, they might enjoy that more. I'll keep encouraging them.

I have loved custom machine quilting for nearly 18 years now, and having this at-home business also allowed the flexibility to pursue other dreams. I recently retired from ten years of singing with the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square, that "big choir" that I moved to Utah all those years ago to join someday, with weekly broadcasts of Music and the Spoken Word from downtown Salt Lake City. I could rehearse my music while quilting!

Teaching my own kids as well as other 4-H kids to quilt helped me realize that digging down to clear, simple steps worked best for them. This has been a factor not only when designing quilts and writing

patterns, but has become my personal quest in life: To seek for tips, tricks, tools and solutions that simplify the process of quilting, then share that with others.

Since joining the guild, I've participated in many Friendship Block Exchanges, Round Robin groups and Mystery Quilts, and Design Challenges. My favorite quilt was the year we learned five different piecing techniques, five different applique' techniques, and finished with lessons on setting odd-sized blocks together, plus an embroidery lesson. That quilt not only represents my growth as a quilter, but represents the friendships gained along the way.



Another wonderful thing to come from joining the guild and making new friends has been the opportunity to participate in Design Challenges, specifically for HMQS, the Home Machine Quilting Show held in Salt Lake City for about 18 years. They would host the challenge and issue fabric kits to individuals and groups to create a quilt of their choice and enter it in the challenge. My first challenge in 2007 included six other members of the guild, and our collaboration won us first place in the challenge! The quilt, along with nearly 2 dozen others were displayed during the show, then sold at auction to benefit that year's charity. I participated in groups for the next several years. You can see a collection of these prize-winning challenges from 2007—2011 [HERE](#).

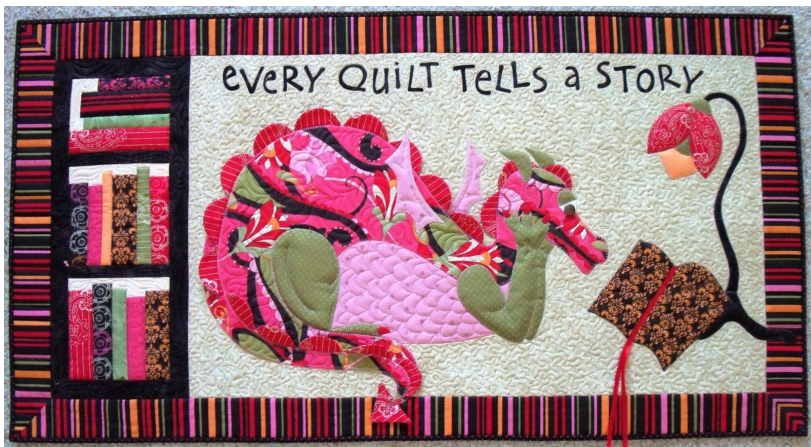


Riley Blake Designs, a local fabric manufacturing company located in Alpine, Ut, began producing designer fabrics, a step beyond the Primary Kid and Missionary flannel they started with. They used designers from the scrapbook paper design industry to launch their company. Riley Blake Designs supplied the fabrics for the 2010 HMQS Design Challenge; and 24 packets. Each with a bundle of 8 fat quarters from their newest line were given out. It was not my favorite fabric! Dark browns and hot pink, with apricot, red, beige and olive green was used. But there was a certain style to the fabric, and Debbie Proctor, her daughter Kami and I made up the quilt, representing the Show's theme for that year, "Every Quilt Has a Story". It was based on a pattern called "Not All

Dragons are Scary” by Allicia Politis. My daughter Lauren had used the pattern to make herself a large quilt a few years prior, and the fabric seemed to suit the design. We didn’t win first place that year, but took the 3rd place prize. However, the little quilt we made was sold at auction for \$825 to a schoolteacher! The folks at Riley Blake Designs did not win it, but wanted one to, and afterward

asked if we’d like to make one for their new office. Debbie and Kami declined, but I agreed. They supplied enough fabrics to not only make one for their new office, one for their warehouse, and I had enough of the scraps to make one for myself. This is version #4.

You can see the other three versions of this quilt and read all about that story and the quilt that inspired it at bit.ly/dragonquiltstory.



Over the years, several of our Design Challenge quilts have been purchased by Cindy Cloward, co-owner of Riley Blake Designs, and live in her sewing room at home.

This quilt established a relationship with the owners of Riley Blake Designs, who invited me to write regular monthly How to Sew/How to Quilt tutorials on their website. They gave me free rein, and I could choose whatever I wanted to make or learn, and they supplied all the fabrics and notions I needed. I did a series of How to Quilt, Stitchery, Gathers, and Fancy Finishes, and was privileged to do that for nearly five years, also making a series of How to Quilt video tutorials with Cindy Cloward, co-owner of the company. Whatever I wanted to do, I’d make the project, taking pictures of the process, and at the end, I’m an expert! I can tell you all you need to know about things like Binding and Smocking! I then joined Riley Blake’s team of influencers, designing and making projects and sharing those on my social media for the next five years. In all, I’ve compiled over 100 projects and accompanying tutorials, sponsored by Riley Blake Designs, which you can find on my blog, www.QuiltscapesQS.com. One of those tutorials, my [Little Birdie Pincushion](#), made its way into a book called [Fifty Little Gifts](#), which is still available on Amazon.



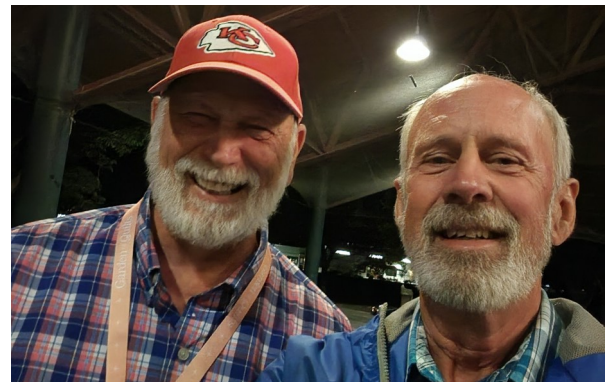
To say I love quilting is a bit of an understatement! I’m just a little bit obsessed with this craft and the places it has taken me. At one time, while teaching at Riley Blake Designs’ Fabric Fest Quilting Conference in Las Vegas, I met Jenny Doan and her daughters. Jenny was also teaching at the conference. One night after teaching, we were treated to see the Donny & Marie show, and the Doans and I sat together. We became friends, especially since they learned that I sang in the Tabernacle Choir, and they could watch me during General Conference. A fun memory was that of going to Quilt Market to do demos at the Riley Blake Designs’ booth and seeing a horde of people crowded around Jenny Doan. Then her daughter Sarah and a few other



family members darted out from the crowd to come over to me—"We saw you on TV!" they shouted. I had to giggle. And I happened to have CDs of the choir in my pocket for that very reason—to give to friends while at Quilt Market!

Last summer, Jenny messaged me to ask if she could do a tutorial of one of my patterns, the Tsunami—a giant Storm at Sea pattern. Of course I said yes, then feeling a little disheartened that they would make the video of how to make it, and people wouldn't have to buy the pattern. Well, not only did they mention where to find

my pattern, and provided a link, but they also developed an acrylic template to go with it. As of today, I have sold them over 1,000 patterns so they can resell on their website, but I've also benefitted from online digital sales on my Etsy shop. A few months later, Misty Doan, Jenny's daughter-in-law, did a video of my Log Cabin Tree Skirt, and as of today, sending out another 264 patterns, that brings my total to over 1,000 copies shipped to Missouri Star Quilt Co. At the recent Garden of Quilts event, the gals shopped in my little suitcase and chose several other patterns they'd like to pursue. Unbelievable! And they are the sweetest family! Jenny's husband, Ron and my husband, Evan, hit it off at the show. Ron told me they consider us family too.



In addition to my longarm quilting business, designing and making quilts, and selling patterns on my Etsy shop, I also love to teach quilting classes. I come up out of the basement at least once a month to travel and teach classes at quilt shops, retreats and quilting conventions and shows around the Intermountain West from Blackfoot, Idaho to Page, Arizona; from Tooele to Vernal, Utah and all points in between along the Wasatch Front. I'm so grateful for the friendships that have been fostered by sharing this common passion, for the things I've learned, and for the opportunities to stretch my creativity, make fun things, share what I've learned, all while being inspired and cheered on by this wild bunch of like-minded folks! We make stuff! And we can make a difference! There is nothing like the feeling of wrapping up in a warm quilt that is more than a quilt - it's a hug, it's love, it's blood, sweat and tears, sometimes literally! Quilting is art - it's the expression of our



lives. Quilting is such a happy passion, it's therapy.

I am thrilled to be asked to head up Heber Valley Quilters this year. I love and admire my fellow quilters, and am in awe of your drive, your creativity, your talents and perseverance. I'm perfectly aware that I have big shoes to fill, but with the help of all of you, we can keep

making, and keep making a difference. We've chased our dreams together over the years, and I can't wait to see us soar to new heights this year and in the years to come.

~ Deonn Stott 2023