



This Kubota tractor quilt is an original design by Ruth Keller, who was encouraged and helped by her husband, David E., a salesman at Keller Brothers near Schaefferstown. The center is the picture of a tractor taken from a T-shirt and the patches are a variety offered by Kubota.

## Custom-Made Quilt Boasts Kubota Tractor

BY SALLY BAIR

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Traditional quilts come in a wide variety of colors and patterns, but Ruth Keller has designed a quilt that is truly unique. At the urging of her husband, David E., she has made a bright quilt using patches and a picture of the Kubota tractor.

David works as a tractor salesman at Keller Brothers just west of Schaefferstown which have sold Kubotas for over 10 years. The finished quilt is done in the distinctive orange and blue Kubota colors. Ruth says, "I made sure I had the tractor shade — I matched it to the one we have in our garage."

Once Ruth worked out the design, using 40 blocks with one double sized one, David helped arrange the patches by color. The center, a double patch, came from the back of a T-shirt which carried the tractor picture.

David even took an interest in the quilting patterns themselves, suggesting ones that looked appropriately masculine to go with the tractor theme. It was his idea to use tractor tire treads to highlight the middle patch on the quilt. He drew the design for Ruth to copy and she faithfully duplicated two treads on either side of the tractor. To make an accurate design, David ran a toy tractor's tread through an ink pad and then transferred that to paper and enlarged it.

At the corners of the patches there are the letters for Kubota and the logo. Again, David made the pattern for tracing the logo and the letters onto the fabric.

The border of the quilt is blue and the Kellers used an orange print fabric as part of the design. Ruth said it was the only orange with blue print she found, and fortunately the orange was the right shade.

The 94-by-104-inch quilt took 147 hours of quilting, 107 hours of which are Ruth's. She had hoped to complete the entire project herself, but had to get the quilt out of the frame for another quilt, a project of the New Covenant Christian School, Lebanon, benefit auction quilt committee.

Ruth's interest in quilting has grown as a result of her five-year association with the committee. Although none of her four children attends the school, Ruth works with the group in obtaining "as many quilts as we can" for the annual auction.

Sometimes the committee purchases tops and gives them to church groups to quilt or find other groups of friends who are willing to quilt. It was a "friendship quilt" from the school that had to go into the frame on which the tractor quilt was being worked.

Ruth herself has been spending one-half day each week for the last two years quilting with a group in

her church, the Midway Church of the Brethren. It was there that the concept for the tractor quilt was nourished through a member of the group who has made quilts for her grandson utilizing various patches of a wide variety of designs.

Ruth entered the one-of-a-kind quilt in the Lebanon Gilder's Guild Show in May and won honorable mention in the "combination of techniques" category. She said there was a lot of interest in her quilt, especially among the men, and at least one woman noticed the special tractor treads used for accenting the center patch.

Quilting took place in Ruth's basement on a frame which belonged to David's mother. Ruth said, "Years ago they didn't make quilts so big so David made me new boards and I am using the original four legs."

Ruth admits that it has only been in recent years that she has put the frame up in her basement, because "I felt it was cheating the children." With her youngest now 17, she feels she can use that space at least part of the year, though the frame also shares the room with exercise equipment.

Ruth calls her experience on the benefit auction quilt committee a learning experience. "I learned a lot working with others on the committee who knew a little more

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This Kubota tractor was featured on a T-shirt and Ruth cut it out to fashion the center of her quilt. Notice the tire treads on either side of the tractor. The pattern for these was created by her husband, David.

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