

# Quilting Is Her Thing

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Elk Co.

RIDGWAY (Elk Co.) — Nursing and quilting may seem like an unusual combination. But for Judy Morris of Ridgway, it's been a perfect combination.

It is said that everyone should have a relaxing hobby that's completely different from their job. That's certainly true for Judy, a midwife with 18 years experience, and a former Army nurse for 21 years.

Although Judy's mother and grandmother both quilted, Judy didn't really get started in quilting until after she married. Since then, her love for quilting has grown dramatically — she makes almost 20 quilts a year and estimates that she's made more than 600 quilts.

Judy especially enjoys designing the quilts, such as one she made with a cat chasing a mouse. Sometimes she sends her pieced quilt tops away to be quilted.

Judy used to just work on one quilt at a time, but today, she has several quilts going at once. In 1972, she made a quilt in one day after taking a "Quilt in a Day" class. "Quilting is a lot faster today," said Judy, especially if you quilt by machine or make a "strip quilt," where you sew together by machine a whole row of quilt blocks, building row upon row.

Today quilting has gone high tech with computer software. Many old and new patterns can be printed and the design possibilities are unlimited on a computer. Recently Judy got a computer with a quilt program that she can't wait to use. It has more than 5,000 quilt designs. If she types in "Sun Bonnet Sue," she gets it in both an antique or modern design. Type size block desired into the computer and it will print out a template. She can also figure out the colors and designs and see what they look like before going to the store to buy the fabric. Furthermore, when she types in the size quilt desired, the computer shows how much fabric to buy. She also can print directions to assemble the quilt.

Judy is so excited that Ridgway now has its very own quilt shop, Jo Rae's Quilt Shop, located next to the Post Office. She not only sells fabrics but also gives lessons. Like all quilters, Judy has her own stash of fabrics, so she'll never run out of quilt projects. Even though she's a busy mother and works outside the home, Judy didn't wait until she retired to get started quilting. According to Judy, "You make time for what's important!"

Judy has developed a host of friends through quilting as she



Quilting is part of Judy Morris' therapy in her fight against cancer. Her projects are on display with Elk County Cancer and Tobacco Education's Pink Ribbon Millennium Quilt Project.

belongs to quilting groups in St. Marys, Warren, and DuBois.

The New City Quilters of St. Marys do a "block of the month," where each member brings in a block of fabric for a quilt. When it was Judy's turn, she asked everyone to do an angel and to personalize it. So she has angels that cook, garden, sew, etcetera. Judy also enjoys the group's doing "row quilts," where a theme is selected and people do a row of blocks related to the theme such as one on holidays, which she's working on now. There are blocks for Lincoln, Washington, and even a ground hog for Ground Hog's Day. In the end, each person will get a wall hanging, made up of strips of quilt blocks from others in the group.

Once a year, Judy gets together with several of her friends for a "Quilting Weekend." She says, "It's amazing how much you can get done when you can quilt without interruptions."

Judy's love for quilting has become contagious. Everyone in her family can quilt except for her husband, a pharmacist, and her pet dog. Even her son Peter can quilt! (He's also a self-taught juggler, who enjoys performing for children's parties and school groups.)

When Judy's quilt group, "The New City Quilters," decided last fall to participate in the Elk County Cancer and Tobacco Education's "Pink Ribbon Millennium Quilt Project," Judy decided to participate. She is a

nine-year breast cancer survivor and was so relieved that was behind her. Little did she know that by the time her project was due in early May, she's be going through an even more serious bout with breast cancer.

She said the support her family and friends have given her during this challenging time in her life, has been such a blessing. At the same time, Judy hopes she can be a help and encouragement to others going through the throes of breast cancer.

It's never easy, but sharing the load with somebody else certainly helps ease the burden. Her other suggestion is "Remember to take one day at a time. Each day gets a little bit better."

For Judy, part of her recuperation will be quilting! After all, she wants to try out her new quilting program on her computer.

Judy's project and more than 50 other Pink Ribbon Millennium Quilt Projects that will be on display June 22-July 7 at the Elk County Council of the Arts, on North Broad Street in Ridgway, in conjunction with Ridgway's Independence Festival. Later, the projects will be displayed in July at the Holy Rosary Festival in Johnsonburg and at the Black Cherry Festival in Kane, as well as in September at the Home Town Festival in St. Marys, and at the Quilt Show in Emporium in November.

Questions? Call the Pink Ribbon project director, Teddy Armstrong at (717) 965-2984.

## Paws Farm Dedicates Butterfly Garden In Memory Of Brenda Ripoli

PHILADELPHIA (Philadelphia Co.) — Family, friends and coworkers gathered at the Paws Farm Nature Center in Mount Laurel, N.J., on June 23 to dedicate the new Butterfly Garden in memory of Brenda Berman Ripoli.

An interactive display, the Butterfly Garden was funded in part by the American Dairy Association/Dairy Council Middle Atlantic, where Ms. Ripoli had been employed for 12 years before her death in April 1999.

Ms. Ripoli served as director of nutrition education and marketing for ADA/DC Middle Atlantic. She was responsible for programs aimed at educators, school food service personnel and health professionals. She also was instrumental in the design and coordination of several exhibits currently housed at Paws Farm.

"Brenda was a leader in the field of nutrition education and was a tremendous asset to our organization," said Bret Rigby,

CEO of ADA/DC Middle Atlantic. "We are pleased to dedicate this garden in her memory. It is a fitting tribute to the spirit and dedication she brought to our organization and to those with whom she worked."

The Butterfly Garden enhances the many innovative exhibits at Paws Farm, a nonprofit nature center located on a dairy farm. The garden features a decorative fountain and children's play equipment, and a children's bridge created by Eagle Scout Gary Place, Maple Shade, N.J.

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