

# Welcome to Quilters Anonymous!

## FAQ about QA

### ❖ *Frequently asked questions about Quilters Anonymous*

We're delighted to have you as a guest or as a new member of Quilters Anonymous, the oldest and largest membership quilting organization in the Puget Sound area. QA exists through the volunteer efforts of its many members, who benefit from meeting and working with others of common interest. We hope that the following information will help you to quickly feel a part of the group and encourage you to participate, thus increasing the value of your QA membership. Happy quilting!

### ❖ *What are the benefits and responsibilities of being a QA member?*

The QA membership year runs from October through the following September. Membership dues are \$40 for the full year and are due by September 15<sup>th</sup>. Members who join the first day of the Quilt Show (or March 1, whichever is later) through the end of August pay \$20.00 for the partial year's membership. Members aged 80 years or older are granted free lifetime membership.

A new member receives a membership packet, a nametag, and a roster upon joining. QA members receive the monthly newsletter, may attend meetings, may use the library and are eligible to participate in workshops and the annual quilt show. Each member receives a new membership roster once a year in November. The roster covers the By-laws and the Standing Rules, identifies the officers and chairperson for each committee, provides information about the annual quilt show, and contains the names of all members who joined by September of that year.

Each member is required to work 4 hours per year as chairperson, committee member or volunteer at the quilt show. By custom, although not by Standing Rule, each member is expected to purchase at least 10 tickets for the annual raffle quilt. There are no other specific requirements for volunteering in QA although the organization depends heavily on the volunteer efforts of all the members.

### ❖ *May I bring guests to a meeting, such as my non-quilting sisters when they visit me?*

Sure, bring them along – maybe they'll be intrigued enough to take up quilting themselves! Please enter their names in the guest notebook so they can be introduced during the meeting. You'll also find paper nametags there for your guests so other members can chat with them during the breaks in the meeting. A guest may visit two meetings before paying membership dues.

❖ ***What's the difference, if any, between the day meetings and the night meetings?***

Generally the featured speaker is the same at both meetings but two different programs might be given. Some members choose to attend both sessions if they are particularly interested in the speaker's samples, backgrounds, etc. Both sessions follow the same format – business meeting followed by featured speaker and Show and Tell, but the business portion of the night sessions tends to be shorter.

❖ ***I see people wearing nice nametags at the QA meetings. What are these? How do I get one?***

Each member of QA receives a nametag to wear at the QA meetings and when working at the quilt show. The nametags are picked up at the beginning of the meeting and returned at the end. The membership team stores them back in the nametag boxes. (Note: The nametags are not in strict alphabetical order although they are always sorted within the proper letter group.) Guests are also given temporary nametags so that people can easily introduce themselves. (In addition, some of the people who have been members for a number of years occasionally wear the original cloth nametags which they made upon joining QA in the past. The nametags are no longer provided for new members.)

❖ ***How can I take part in the door prize drawings at the meeting?***

Occasionally there are door-prize drawings held at the meetings. If one is to be held, two part raffle tickets will be handed out to everyone (usually inside the door to the auditorium), keep your half and give the other half to the person who is collecting them and then keep your fingers crossed! Some of the door prizes have been donated by local quilt-orientated businesses, others by members themselves. Prizes can consist of books, patterns, various items of sewing or quilting notions, pieces of fabric, quilted items made by members, etc – the assortment and quantity will vary each month. It is something of a tradition however, that if your name is drawn for a door prize then you donate a suitable item in the near future to delight some other winner.

❖ ***Are there any rules for taking part in 'Show and Tell'?***

None at all. We all like to see what other members are doing! It is more interesting, however, if you have a short story to tell about the quilt – if it has some history to its making, or was created for some special occasion or recipient, involves a group effort, or presented some particular design or construction problem that needed to be solved before it could be completed. Members who are quilting instructors often show examples of designs they will be teaching for local shops. Class organizers show examples of work that a visiting instructor will be presenting in workshops, either for QA or other local groups. Sometimes an entire satellite group will have chosen a particular design and show all the individual interpretations of the design in their array of finished quilts. And it's always fun to share in the accomplishment of a member showing her just-completed first quilt. So no one should be shy about taking part in Show and Tell. Warm applause from a supportive group of quilters is a very heartening experience! (Please be sure to give your name before your Show and Tell so that everyone can begin to know you.)

❖ *The roster lists a lot of 'Satellite Groups.' What are they? Should I join one?*

If you do nothing else as a QA member, join a satellite group! It's the fastest way to make new friends in QA and the quilting community. If you're a beginner, a satellite group's members can function as mentors to guide you in your own quilting. You'll be exposed to the products of others' quilting styles, and learn more about area groups, published resources, and quilting classes and workshops both locally and in other regions. If you're already an experienced quilter, the right satellite group can provide you a higher level of challenge and peer exchange.

Some of the groups have been formed with an interest in a certain style or type of quilting, others by people who live near each other, still others by members who were already close friends and who wanted another reason to get together. Because the majority of the groups meet in member's homes, sometimes there can be a space consideration that prevents one group or another from welcoming new members at a particular time. Names and numbers of contacts for each of the existing satellite groups are listed in the current roster, along with information on the times and dates of their meetings.

But before calling any, you would benefit from thumbing through the 'Satellite Group Album'. This is a notebook with a page for each of the different groups (usually with a group photo), describing the group's focus and providing location, date, and time of meetings and the contact information, as well as indicating if the group is seeking new members. The satellite notebook is available at each meeting; check at the 'New Members' table in the lobby to see it. If you still have questions, chat with the Satellite Group Coordinator (see you current newsletter) about which groups might best fit your needs. Sometimes the answer may be that you choose to form a new satellite group for reasons of location or interest. The coordinator would be happy to help you get the word out that such a new group is being formed.

❖ *I've heard there's a QA Library – what's in it, and where is it?*

Yes, the QA Library is a great benefit! There is a wealth of information available to all members, including over 1000 books and videos and *Quilters Newsletter* magazines. You'll find more ideas that any one quilter could use, whether you're a beginner or have been quilting a lifetime! New titles are added every month; check the newsletter to find out what they are. In addition, the list of all library books is available on the QA web site, [www.quiltersanonymous.org](http://www.quiltersanonymous.org)

Discounts on book purchases are available to members through our membership in the American Quilters Society (AQS) and for subscriptions to *Fon's & Porters Love of Quilting magazine*. (Order forms are in the Library)

If you're new to quilting we have a bibliography of 'getting started' books in our collection just for you! Here's help for that first project from how much fabric to buy to putting on the binding.

QA members started the library through donations. We continue to rely on members to grow our resources. Over 30% of the items added to the Library come through donation! If there are duplicates or for some reason certain items cannot be used, they'll be put out for sale to members along with items periodically discarded from the collection.

The Library is located along the hallway; just ask at The New Members Table where it is. It is open before the meetings, during the breaks, and for a short period of time after the meetings. Members may have three items checked out at any one time. You'll have one month to create your masterpiece before the materials are due back in to the library! Questions? Contact the Librarian, listed in the newsletter or the roster.

❖ *What are these 'Angel Quilts'?*

Angel Quilts are lap sized quilts given to members who are experiencing a severe illness or other life altering circumstance such as the loss of a spouse. These members need to be wrapped in love from their quilt friends in QA. The quilts are made on a continuing basis through the efforts of QA volunteers and kept for when they are needed.

The program was started in 1995 to provide quilts for members suffering terminal illnesses. The lap size was chosen to cover the top of a hospital bed. Over the years the criteria for receiving an Angel Quilt have broadened to cover a wide variety of situations that affect a member's lifestyle and ability to quilt and/or attend QA meetings. These situations would be – lengthy hospitalizations, extended recuperation from illness, disability, debilitating disease, severe injury, illness or death of child etc. While general guidelines have been developed they remain somewhat fluid, as the committee that reviews requests for these quilts have found that the emotional impact of, say, surgery, loss, or family crisis will vary greatly between individuals. If you know of another member's situation and feel that person needs an Angel Quilt, notify either the Angel Quilts or Caring & Sharing chair listed in the newsletter, of your request. If the committee's decision is positive, an Angel Quilt will be delivered promptly either by the chair, other volunteers, or the special friend who made the request. (If the committee determines the situation does not meet the general criteria, then the person's friends or satellite group should consider creating a special quilt themselves.)

The Angel Quilt committee consists of many volunteers who make these wonderful quilts, using the same skills that they would use of their own special quilts. A volunteer may choose the fabric for the quilt patterns used, cut the quilt kits that are signed out at the meetings, sign out a kit and piece the quilt top, machine quilt the quilt (preferably long arm), sew on the binding, and make the very special Angel Quilt labels.

If you would like to help the Angel Quilt project, call the chair (see listing in your latest newsletter, or the roster) and watch for announcements of any scheduled work party or requests for specific tasks connected with producing these special quilts from the heart.

❖ *What are 'Q-Angels' Are they related to 'Angel Quilts'?*

The names sound similar but this is a different activity, A 'Q-Angel' is a 'secret pal' with whom you interact incognito throughout the Q-Angel year (April through March). Q-Angel participants note their favorite quilting styles, fabric types, colors, shops, holidays, hobbies, etc. The chair matches compatible quilters and lets each person know the important facts about the secret pal. Q-Angels then leave small gifts for each other at the meetings eight or nine times a year, not revealing their identities until the year

ends. If you would like participate, contact the Q-Angels chair listed in your latest newsletter for a questionnaire/application.

❖ *There was a report at the meeting about 'Premie Quilts.' What are these?*

The Premie Quilts program is one of the most popular and successful activities of QA, and an easy and fun one for every member to take part in. This QA program was started in 1986 by a member whose husband was in charge of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at University Hospital in Seattle. Every year since then QA members have been producing between 400 and 600 quilts a year for the premature babies cared for in the NICU. Each baby goes home with his or her special quilt, and we frequently receive notes from grateful parents as well as the NICU nurses thanking us these for these soft, colorful quilts. In the past several years, members (and some relatives) have also created hundreds of knitted caps and booties for babies in the NICU. (Patterns are available.) Some members celebrate their own birthdays by making a premie quilt. Donations of flannel and materials for the quilt tops or baby yarn for the knitted items are always welcome, and members are free to use any of the donated materials.

QA provides flannel for quilt backs. The committee pre-washes and cuts the flannel, and has a supply of these quilt backs available for members to take home and combine with their own materials for the quilt tops. Just look for the box of flannel backs and the sign-out book on the perimeter of the auditorium. Be sure to take one if the printed handouts on sizing and construction details of the quilt, as there are some special requirements. Then when you bring back your completed quilt, it will be displayed with all the others turned in that month. Finished quilts are delivered to the NICU each month. If you choose a specific holiday theme,(e.g. Christmas or Valentine's Day), ideally those quilts should be turned in one month ahead of the holiday. The Premie Quilts committee sponsors a work party once a year (currently in August) where members sew up an astonishing number of quilts (or other holiday items) in a spirit of creativity and friendly competition, all for a good cause. The work parties will be announced in the newsletter and at prior meetings; watch for them.

Working on a Premie Quilt gives you a chance to play with many different designs and experiment on a small scale, even as you create a useful and appreciated item. The NICU nurses advise us that they can easily use 40 to 50 quilts per month, so your participation will be extremely worthwhile. Questions? Call the committee chair listed in your latest newsletter, or check with one of the committee members near the quilt display ahead of a meeting.

❖ *Are there any other Community Service activities in which QA participates?*

QA is a non-profit organization and in maintaining this status, the guild donates money, as well as specially created and handmade items to various charities. Community Service Projects include:

    Premie Quilts (described earlier)

    Christmas Stockings Project

    Gifts of Soft Comfort for University of Washington Medical Center

    Baby Quilts for "Operation Home Front" Baby Love Project

Pillowcases for Fisher House

Evergreen Hospice Charity Project

Covered with Love Quilts

Quilted Comforts for Our Elderly

Knitted Chemo Hats

Quilts and Equipment for Homeless Women

Other projects are the primary focus of some Satellite Groups. One example is a Satellite Group that makes quilts for Camp Erin, a bereavement camp for children.

Most of our Community Service Projects are listed on our Web Site with descriptions of the organizations served and pictures of sample items donated. There are also many patterns included for projects, if you want to use them to make something and donate your items to a specific charity. You may contact our Community Services Committee Chair for more information.

❖ *There's a lot of buzz about 'The Quilt Show.' What is it? How can I get involved?*

Without volunteers for the many jobs attached to the annual QA Quilt Show, it wouldn't happen. In fact, each QA member is required to devote four hours to helping with some aspect of the show in order to be a member in good standing. This is another excellent way to meet your fellow QA members and to learn more about the major activities and traditions of the organization. Volunteer sign-up forms are printed in the newsletter several months ahead of the show, starting with the November newsletter. If you have any questions about the specific job involves and where you might best put your efforts, contact the Staffing Committee listed on the form.

For the past several years, the show -- traditionally in March -- has been held at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds in Monroe, northeast of Seattle. The show is probably the largest annual quilt show in the area. It draws more than 4,000 interested quilters, from the entire Puget Sound regions as well as British Columbia. Several busloads of quilters always come in from Spokane, Wenatchee and Portland, and some particularly devoted quilt fans fly in especially for the show. You are welcome to submit some of your quilts and/or quilted apparel for the show. It's not a juried show, so you have every chance to see your work displayed -- as long as you and your entries meet the guidelines for the show entries as published in the annual roster. Again, if you have any questions, call the show chair well ahead of time.

There is a 'Preview Party' the evening before the three day show opens to the public, and all members are invited to this event. Take this opportunity to view the wonderful array of the quilting arts (and perhaps take some pictures to keep as memories) before the big crowds arrive the next day.

As part of the Quilt Show, it's been a tradition for QA volunteers to produce, during the year between shows, a quilt of unique design that is displayed at the show and raffled off at show's end. Tickets for the Raffle Quilt become available around the beginning of the previous year -- usually at the June and

subsequent monthly meetings. It's another tradition that each member responsibility for purchasing (or reselling) \$10 worth of tickets. Funds received from the raffle quilt are important to QA, and the raffle quilt is always a genuine work of art that anyone would feel honored to own.

In addition to the raffle quilt it has become a tradition to produce a *Quilt Show Pin*. It is usually designed to coordinate with the raffle quilt. These pins become available to members (usually in January) for pre-show purchase at a price slightly lower than at the quilt show. Many members are proud of their collection of these annual quilt show pins.

❖ ***What about the potlucks and charity workshops mentioned in the newsletter? Is everyone invited?***

Potlucks are traditional for the August and December meetings, and all members and their guests are definitely welcome. Bring any type of food dish you wish that serves 6-8; the variety always seems to work out. The potlucks are held in the auditorium, plates, cups and cutlery are provided.

Once a year (in August) in conjunction with a potluck, QA holds a charity workshop where members bring their sewing machines. Cutting and ironing tables are set-up so that the work can proceed in factory style. In addition, there is occasionally a 'kitting workshop' on a Thursday when there is no education workshop. The purpose of these kitting days is to cut fabric for preemie or stocking kits that can be taken home by individual members. Such kitting days will be announced in the meeting and in the newsletter.

❖ ***Is the 'Mentors' committee for new folks like me?***

Actually, this committee of three members is the 'Special Committee' referred to in the bylaws – a body comprised of longtime members responsible for mentoring the officers and board in their conduct of the operation of the organization in line with the bylaws, traditions and principles of QA. You should feel free to contact any officer or committee chair with questions you have about the organization where it meshes with their sphere of responsibility. You are also encouraged to reach out to other members of the organization at the meeting when you have questions about QA that haven't been explained in these pages. Even if they don't have all the answers, they'll still be happy to help!

❖ ***What are these classes or workshops I see mentioned now and then in the newsletter?***

Frequently, when the speakers featured at the meetings are teachers who conduct classes and workshops, they will put on sessions in their quilting specialties for QA members. Speaker workshops are offered on the Thursday following the day meeting. Saturday workshops are scheduled each year for the needs of members working full time. Taking part in these day-long classes is not only a wonderful opportunity to work one-on-one with some of the quilting world's stars, but also a great way to get to know your fellow QA members better. The workshops are held in the auditorium. Classes and workshops are described in the newsletter ahead of time, with instructions for signing up, and are usually also announced at several regular meetings ahead of the deadline. If you have questions about the classes or what supplies are needed, contact the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President listed in your latest newsletter.

❖ *What's this 'Retreat' I keep hearing about?*

QA retreats are held annually in the spring and fall. Recent retreats have been held at Camp Huston, an idyllic setting in the Cascade foothills near Gold Bar. The friendly staff at Camp Huston provides all the meals – you have nothing to do but quilt, quilt, quilt! Everyone attending is assigned a workspace in one of five workrooms that range in size from a cozy space for eight quilters to a large hall with room for 34. During the five-day retreats, there are no structured classes or workshops, and no instructors. You bring all your own quilting materials and supplies and work on your own projects, at your own speed. (And if any time in the afternoon a hike or nap seems more important than quilting, that's fine too.) You are rubbing elbows with some of the most creative quilters in the area, so opinions, advice and help are always at hand. Periodic walk-throughs of the various workrooms to see what others are doing will provide both education and inspiration. Attending a retreat is another good way to develop friendships within QA. And because they are so much fun, retreats are also *extremely* popular. Space is limited, so if you want to attend, be sure to follow the registration instructions when announced in the newsletter, and get to the post office early on the day of registration, applications must be postmarked!

❖ *Does QA have a web site? What is the address and what type of information might I find there?*

QA does have a web site which you can access at [www.quiltersanonymous.org](http://www.quiltersanonymous.org). On the web site you can read general information about QA, find directions to meeting location, learn about meetings, and see a photograph our current Raffle Quilt, and read through these FAQs if you have lost your copy. Members are able to access a list of officers and committee chairs, the monthly newsletter, see the lists of library books, and submit entries for the quilt show during the quilt show registration. Quilt show information and winning quilts from QA's annual quilt show are also on the web site. Over time we have begun to use the web site for more and more communications within the organization. Please take time to visit the web site to learn even more about QA.