

QUILTING SISTAH NEWS



African American Quilt Guild of Oakland

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Since March our city, county, state, and country have gone through many changes. New phrases and terminology have entered into our lexicon such as: COVID-19, pandemic, shelter-at-home, quarantine, PPEs, surgical masks, cloth coverings for mouths and noses, no gatherings larger than 10 people, essential businesses, phases of closing and re-opening of our communities.

As quilters, we have been hard at work finding and creating mask patterns and digging into our stash to find appropriate fabric to make masks for first responders, hospital staff, essential workers, and family and friends. When elastic became scarce and impossible to find, we found T-shirts make wonderful ear loops. When fusible lightweight interfacing became scarce, we either dug deep in our stash to find some or went online. When our local fabric stores were deemed essential, how many of us stood in line to pick up just one more essential item? Some of you have made hundreds of masks and are now looking for other projects.

Truly life has changed and AAQGO is also having to adapt to the times. The Oakland Public Library system shut down in March. The re-opening of the West Oakland Public library continues to be extended. Our 20th anniversary celebrations for AAQGO continue to be challenging.

20 years ago, the charter members of our organization overcame challenges to make AAQGO come into existence. As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, we are presented with new challenges of how to keep the vision and mission of AAQGO viable in a whole new world of realities. As we move through this Pandemic, we want to continue to be connected to you, our guild member. We are looking at new ways to communicate with our membership through virtual reality such as ZOOM for our meetings.

We have come so far as an organization over the last 20 years. With your help, ideas, dedication, and vision, we will continue to move forward into the next 20 years. Please stay safe. Wear your mask and practice social distancing. In the spirit of Maya Angelou, I leave you with her words:

My mission in life is
Not merely to survive.
But to thrive and to do
So with some passion,
Some compassion, some
Humor, and some style.

Blessings,
Marie dePorres Taylor

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

SPEAKING OF MASKS - ORA CLAY forwarded this ask from MJ Richardson who is requesting that anyone from the Guild who is interested in making and contributing masks for a non-profit agency, please contact MJ Richardson at mjrichardson075@gmail.com.

THE MANY BENEFITS OF GUILD MEMBERSHIP

- ♥ Fun, friendship and fellowship
- ♥ Workshops eliminate the need to take a lot of quilting classes
- ♥ Someone always has an answer to any quilting-related problem
- ♥ The opportunity to show your work in a supportive and encouraging environment
- ♥ Interesting speakers both from the Guild and from outside
- ♥ Encouragement from other quilters to enter quilt shows, submit your work for publication
- ♥ Great snacks and a fun Holiday party
- ♥ All this, for a membership fee for a year, equivalent to a night at the movies with popcorn and a drink!

Guild Members:

We give coasters to guests who come to our meetings. If anyone has time and a few 5x5" scraps, please consider making coasters for our guests! Or Sunshine Committee giveaways.



Neighborhoods Coming Together, Quilts Around Oakland

ENJOY THIS ARTICLE BY LORETTA HENRY

A later bloomer, I came to quilting in my sixties. As part of my education, my friend and I visited the Joyce Gordon Gallery in downtown Oakland to see the quilts produced by the African American Quilt Guild of Oakland (AAQGO) in April, 2016. The exhibit was entitled *Neighborhoods Coming Together, Quilts Around Oakland*.

Jaw-dropping astonishment was my only response as I moved through the exhibit watching the colors dance on their canvases. I wondered at how the artists were able to use fabric in order to tell a story, to evoke emotions and to represent an idea. I wanted to be like them when I grew up. Afterwards whenever the exhibit was displayed throughout the city, I make a point of visiting each and every site.

Who were these amazing artists? Informational flyers provided guild-meeting details. Finally, I got enough courage to attend a monthly meeting. The ladies were so welcoming, but I sat quietly in my chair because I was in the presence of greatness. Viewing the exhibit's catalog blew me away and I wondered if I would ever be worthy to show something that I had made to them. Its president, Marie Taylor, announced that the National Quilt Museum in Paducah, Kentucky had invited the guild

to show the quilts there. Oh, my Lord, I was in over my head.

Fast forward to September 2019, when the AAQGO began celebrating its 20th anniversary. I had joined the History Committee, whose goal was to celebrate the guild's accomplishments with an emphasis on the past 10 years. For me, the Oakland Neighborhood Project was the most important event in the past decade. My association with the guild came about because of it. Again, I wondered how it was developed. Like me, several of its new members were aware of the event, but had no idea of its history. Eureka moment! Reacquainting the guild with this event became my goal.



The Neighborhood Project was the brainchild of Marian Coleman, a former guild president from 2004 until 2006 who would later be honored with a National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) Heritage Fellowship Award in 2018. Ms. Coleman was a creative quilter who pushed boundaries and inspired others.

Narrative quilts full of improvisation and based on the African American quilting traditions were her mission. She was instrumental in providing guild members with places to display their work and was a firm believer in guild involvement with the community. To learn more about this American treasure, you may read her biography (<https://www.arts.gov/honors/heritage/fellows/marion-coleman>) and samples of her work.

Over a series of several guild meetings beginning in 2016, she introduced the concept of a quilt show that was to be based on our home city, Oakland, California, with all of its joys and warts. The members were encouraged to find things that excited them – buildings, projects, historical events, groups, communities and people that illustrated the idea of Oakland. The quilters were encouraged not only to show the positive side of the city, but also its grit and grime.

While many of the guild members had worked with African prints and produced quilts in the African American quilt tradition, most of the members were traditional quilters who produced quilts based on blocks. Ms. Coleman encouraged them to step outside of the box and to use fabric to tell a story. She wanted them to experiment with narrative quilts. They were to find a photo and think of how to use fabric to illustrate it. The members were encouraged to see cloth not as something green with flowers on it, but as a field of spring flowers. A stripped brown section might be a mountain or a tree trunk. They were encouraged to see that water was not just blue, but had other colors reflected in it. At sunset, a lake could appear to be on fire. Shades of gray chiffon and other fabrics could give a feel of cold morning fog. One could show a somber mood with blues and greens, while showing happy joyful experiences with reds, oranges and yellows. Quilters often work in cotton, but they were encouraged to use taffetas, chiffons, corduroy to evoke an idea. The use of appliqué and embellishments was introduced to help tell the story.

Not all members felt comfortable with this process, but over the year 60 quilts were produced. The show committee members had arranged from the quilts to be exhibited all over Oakland at eight different sites including the Oakland City hall Rotunda. Each show hung for several months. A catalog *Neighborhoods Coming Together Quilts, Around Oakland* was published showing the quilts along with each quilter's comments.

The shows were well received through the Bay Area. A reporter for the *New York Times*, Patricia Leigh Brown, was so impressed that she interviewed several exhibitors for an article (<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/03/arts/design/quilts-with-a-sense-of-place-stitched-in-oakland.html>) that appeared in the *New York Times* on February 2, 2016. *Quilts With a Sense of Place, Stitched in Oakland* described how the quilts gave a sense of pride in a community and attempted to define a place through quilts.

The article attracted the attention of Judy Schwender, curator of National Quilt Museum in Paducah, Kentucky, who invited the guild to display the quilts in a show, *Neighborhoods Coming Together, Quilts Around Oakland* in its hall from February 17th through April 11th, 2017. Museum attendees were impressed how quilts could highlight the feel and emotions of a certain time and place. To attract visitors to the exhibit the museum produced a video of the exhibit's highlights explaining why the show was so important to the quilting world and how it help to change the idea of why people quilt. To view the video, go here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bWNHGETwn48>





One of the guild's members, Fran Porter, was able to go to Paducah to view the show in March 2017. The staff made her feel like a rock star. She led a docent tour of the quilts and the attendees were so impressed to meet one of the actual quilters.

The Neighborhoods Coming Together, Quilts Around Oakland project changed the lives of its members and

provided them with a chance to grow and to help the art of quilting evolve. As we travel on life's road, we often come to forks and branches off of the main path. Depending on which path we choose, our life will be changed. I have never regretted my detour to the Joyce Gordon Gallery where I had my Eureka moment!

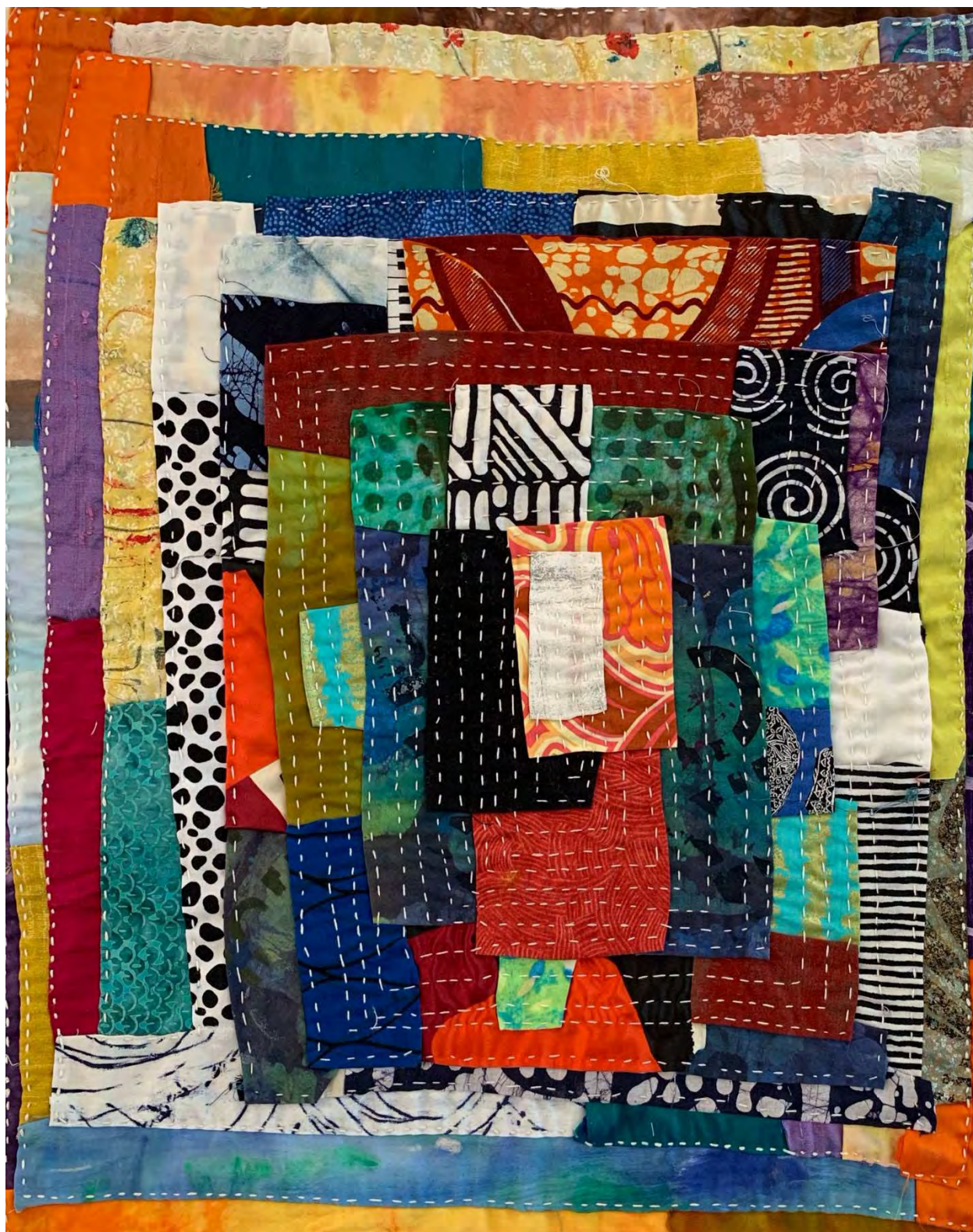
To view quilts in the above exhibit, please go to the African American Quilt Guild of Oakland's website aaqgo.org and click on the Oakland Quilt Project on the home page. The quilts are displayed by the location where they were shown.

CREATING DURING COVID-19 QUARANTINE

Marilyn Handis shared this colorful quilt – “Ode to Sonia Delaunay” completed March, 2020.



Marilyn Handis – Kawandi-style hand stitching completed just before shelter in place. Marilyn’s tips include call, Zoom and/or Facetime with friends and family frequently and get some fresh air and exercise.



NELL MAYS

Distraction seems to be my best tool for staying out of the "rabbit hole" of over-thinking what those 900 million "experts" constantly post on news and social media. Like many I've made numerous masks - the first batch was fulfilling but the last time it was so tedious (esp. since I had no elastic and made straps) that I wanted to pull out my last gray hair. After calling two thirds of the people in my cell phone, church and guild directories that distraction waned. I've caught up on most of my UFO's and made one baby quilt and pieced two more but that too has lost its appeal. I started a bi-weekly newsletter to my sibling and some cousins that was sometimes humorous just to hopefully keep the positive communications going. Trying to be creative, I did an Easter and Mother's Day "mini craft" and mast mailing. Walking in the neighborhood and to the post office regularly has allowed some sun and exercise, a bit of fresh air and glimpses of a few passersby. I'm still planning a trip to a nearby hillside off-road parking space equipped with water, snack and one of many yet unread books. Folks, this is the bottom of the barrel but I'm determined to stay halfway sane.

Don't fall for the let's open up everything hype - stay healthy, stay safe, stay sane, Nell

Ora Clay

I spent some of my shelter at home time to learn to do all the twelve BOM. A big thank you to Ernie who answered all my frantic calls and emails when I needed help.



MASK MAKING AS A WAY OF LIFE

[Evelyn Johnson](#) sent a photo of the masks she has been making.



ROSITA THOMAS

I contributed 30 face masks in response to St. Vincent's de Paul's request to support volunteers working with Oakland's homeless. I have also made many more for friends and neighbors.



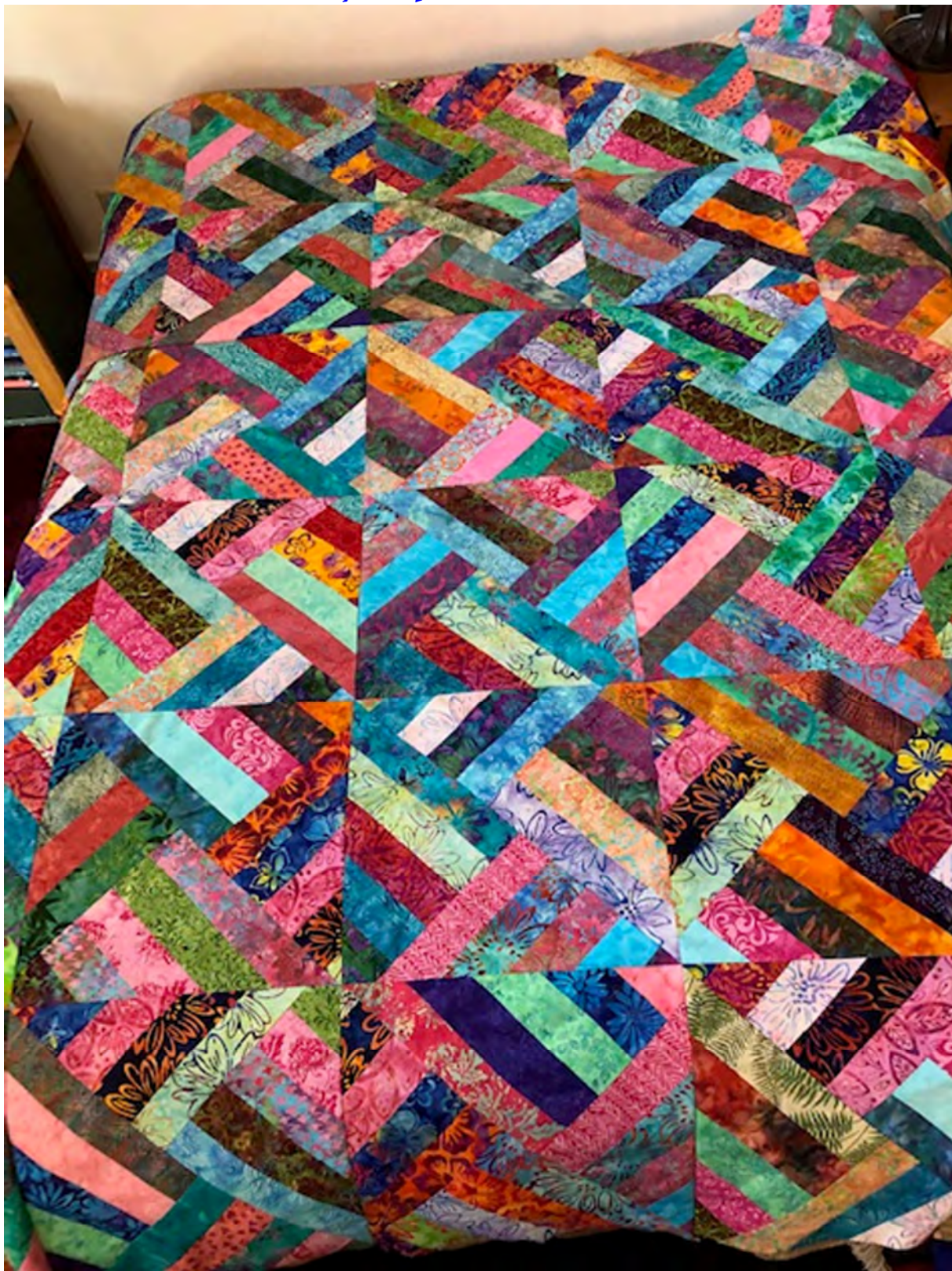
TERESA KORPAL WEYAND

I have tried to view all of this unexpected and unplanned time at home as a blessing and not a bane. Just when I was missing my son, Luke, he, like college kids across the country, came home. I have continued with my Guild activities and my Rotary mentoring. I taught myself (thank you YouTube) how to knit socks and have completed two quilts and have two others in progress.

1ST KNITTED SOCK



LUKE'S QUILT FOR COLLEGE AT ST. MARY'S – No sooner than
I was ready to quilt it he returned home



BABY QUILT FOR A FRIEND



CHRISTMAS QUILT FOR MY COUSIN – Kit from Urban
Elemenz and waiting for the next seven blocks



Catherine Mukai

I made my fifth Worthy Cause quilt for CALICO, which means I've been in the Guild for five happy years. I inherited a bag of coordinating fabrics and a pattern from a friend of a friend and followed the instructions for the flying pinwheel blocks. I also finished a needlepoint I'd been working on off and on for five years. And, of course, masks, although like Nell I take no joy in making these. But what a stashbuster.

I have a weekly Monday-evening sewing date with a friend, and we take turns picking the project. So far we've made zipper pouches, fabric trays, coasters (round and square), Japanese bukuro bags, and card wallets. I wouldn't say it's keeping me sane, but it's keeping me moving!



ERNIE TRIL



FAITH DARLING

This is Faith Darling's current project – her 20X20 quilt to celebrate AAQGO's 20th year. It is unfinished and called, "Dancing in the Street." The quilt is applique, 100% cotton and hand and machine sewn.

Faith's go-to quarantine survival tip is to stay in touch with friends and family, and keep her fabric glue stick handy!



MARISA BROWN

Hello quilters, I hope you are well. I really miss the monthly get togethers, seeing everyone and learning from everyone.

1. Here are some photos of what I have been making.

I finished my 2020 quilt.

I made a Corona quilt (not finished yet)

I made masks and mailed them to friends and family all over the country.

I made a Youtube channel to share science and tech videos with my students (because I miss them so much)

I am making STEM kits for learning for my students (donors choose donated the supplies)

2. I take two long walks a day with my dogs to stay sane each day.

And anytime I start to feel overwhelmed or stressed out, I go out to my garden and sit and appreciating the birds and plants really helps me stay grounded. I hand sew when I feel anxious and make masks in between emails and zoom meetings for work.

Take care of yourselves and your families,

Marisa

CORONA BLANKET



MASKS



MARISA'S 20X20 QUILT



VERONICA LOFTON

This is Veronica's current work in progress. Veronica sends good wishes to all.



AMAL JOHNSON

Amal has been experimenting with tea bags. Here is her first composition:



Amal has also been experimenting with fabric painting on this 10x10 creation:



This last photo is also a 12x12 piece that Amal made at Ann's Summer Retreat.



ZONDRA MARTIN

Zondra asked if she could say it's complete without buttons? She wants to go shopping at Stone Mountain and Daughter where she always finds perfect buttons.



Zondra also sent this picture of a “love”ly quilt – her 20x20 Anniversary Quilt. Her suggestions for getting through this quarantine:

So far, for me, the very best sanity tips are to:

1. Eat
2. Exercise
3. Meditation
4. Journaling
5. Listen to music, dance, audiobooks

6. TV movie viewing
7. Talk on the phone
8. Text messaging
9. Work in the garden
10. Socially Distance face to face visits with friends
11. Work on the completion of my many WIP's. I've completed 6 so far including my 20x20 AAQGO anniversary quilt. I have no idea how many more I have to be completed. I keep finding more incompleeted projects as I continue to de-clutter and reorganize my home and garage.

Zondra Martin



SUSAN STEINHAUER

Susan has been working on these two quilt tops, the first is Woven in Cloth Quilt in A Box which is complete but awaiting quilting and binding to finish.



Susan's Halo Quilt is also waiting for some additional borders.



AAQGO MYSTERY QUILT

Submitted by Ann Robinson

Ann sent this to challenge us and give us an opportunity to bust our stash!

Stash Buster Mystery Quilt 56 ½ x 70

Hello Quilters, I know we are in new times and I, for one, am not handling this very well. I miss my quilting family, my motivation, and inspiration. Here is a stash buster mystery quilt!

Clue One is picking your fabrics:

You will need: *

5 different ½ yard pieces (focus)
2 yards of accent fabric

*Focus:

- Can be a fabric family
- Can be a fabric color group
- Can be a layer cake
- Can be a collection of theme fabric (flowers, kids, etc.)
- You should mix large and small prints
- Use light, medium, and darks
- You can use a directional print

*Accent:

- Think of it as a sashing can be light or dark

Clue Two will be your cutting instructions in one week. YOU WILL WANT TO CHECK YOUR E-MAIL for Clue 2.

Feel free to contact me if you need me to review your fabric choices. Remember to work your stash!

Enjoy
Ann Robinson

Where do I get more elastic?

And other notions for the quarantine

We know of the following local stores which are open for online shopping or curbside pickup during the shelter-in-place. Let us know at AAQGOakland@gmail.com if you know of more.

New Pieces	Berkeley	Shop online: https://new-pieces-quilt-shop.myshopify.com Quilting services continue Gift Cards Available
Sew Images	Oakland	Sewing machine repair and tools
Piedmont Fabric	Oakland	Call to check availability
Stone Mountain	Berkeley	Online store
Bay Quilts	Richmond	Online store
Cotton Patch	Lafayette	Call to check availability
Wooden Gates	Danville	Call to check availability

Let's Get COOKING!

We're putting the icing on our cookbook and want to make ONE LAST CALL FOR RECIPES. We want your recipes!

Please send your recipes for main dishes, appetizers, side dishes and salads, beverages, and desserts to Catherine Mukai at catmukai@gmail.com. Time is running out!

Happy Birthday to our friends!

May	June	July
Frances Porter – 5 Felecia Germany – 6 Teloca McLinn – 7 Sandi Knight – 9 Deborah Salmon – 14 Jerry Oyarzo Hickey – 15 Dedra Hunt - 17 Marjorie Smith – 17 Ann Robinson – 21 Loretta Henry – 26 Madlyn Jones – 26 Marie Taylor - 27	Dianne Gates-Anderson – 1 Ora Knowell – 2 Esther Pancho - 4	Jackqueline Clemons- Dorsey – 4 Midge Robinson – 4 Lucille Barengo - 7

OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

September 1, 2018- August 31, 2020

Officers and committee chairpersons can be reached at aaqgoakland@gmail.com or

PO Box 31834, Oakland, CA 94604

OFFICERS	
President	Marie dePorres Taylor
Vice President	Teresa Weyand
Secretary	Rosita Thomas
Treasurer	Dolores Vitero Presley
Historian	Donald Foreman
COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS	
Black History Month Family Workshop	Ann Robinson
Education	Ernestine Tril
Exhibits	LaQuita Tummings
Membership	Loretta Henry, Catherine Mukai
Newsletter	Teresa Weyand
Sunshine	Evelyn Johnson
Website	Ann Robinson
Worthy Causes	Felecia Germany
SUSPENDED OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES FOR 2018-2020	
Parliamentarian	
Library	
Opportunity Quilt	
Publicity	
Retreat	

MEMBERSHIP: Membership shall be open to anyone interested in the purpose and objectives of this Guild, and payment of annual dues. No discrimination shall be made with regard to race, color, creed, or national origin.

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