



Azie's Blanket Coverage

February 2008 Edition

Covering Metro Phoenix, Arizona

Blanket Delivery Update

Thank you, volunteers! Your generous donations have made it possible for AZ Blankets 4 Kids to distribute **3,573** blankets to various agencies that assist seriously ill and traumatized children during the months of September 2007 through December 2007.

Total deliveries from inception to date :

40,222!

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valentine - *n.* 1. a gift sent as a token of **love** to one's **sweetheart** 2. a written or other artistic work (i.e. blanket), message, token, etc., expressing **affection** for something or someone (i.e. AZ Kids) 3. a person singled out as one who is especially **kind-hearted, caring** and **loving**: AZ Blankets 4 Kids has hundreds of valentines. They are our volunteers!



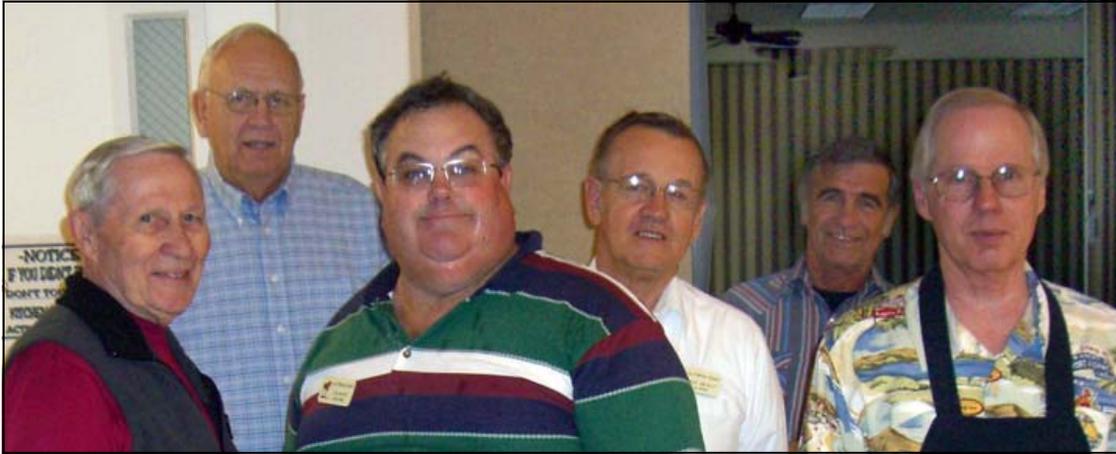
We ♥ These Bears!

We love Barb's scrappy bears and we think you'll love making them too! Las Palmas Grand's Barbara Charlton sews these beautiful bears. Simply save your scrappy strips of fabric. Sew the short ends together first. Trim to same width, then sew the long sides together until you have a scrappy panel like the one Barb's holding below. See the back page of this newsletter for the bear pattern. Then, trace, cut out and appliqué the bear to a simple block. And don't forget to give your bear it's very own heart!





Las Palmas Grand Appreciation Day and Upcoming Auction



Las Palmas Grand had their annual Appreciation Day on December 13, 2007. The handsome fellows in the photo above made a delicious ham lunch with all the fixins. The front row from left to right are Jack Becker, Tim Most and Steve Morgan. The back row from left to right are Don Zirjacks, Dick Snively and Dick Nemece. The top right photo shows the lucky winner of a beautiful raffle quilt (Rick Sutter and Joan Most).

The leading ladies in the photo to the right are Joan Most (left) and Bonnie Becker (right). These ladies helped the group below complete a total of 1,707 blankets in 2007. And this is from a group of approximately 30 ladies. Amazing!!!

If you'd like to support this amazing group, show up at the Las Palmas Grand Ballroom (2550 S. Ellsworth Rd., Mesa) for their white elephant auction. It's at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 9th. Finger foods will be available for your snacking pleasure. You are welcome to bring items to donate any time after noon that day. Otherwise, bring your money and have some fun bidding on items.





“ When two hearts race...

...both win!”



Big-ed Bikers Give Big

On Saturday, December 15, we joined our friends from the Gold Wing F Troop for breakfast at Old Town Buffet in Mesa. This giving group of motorcycle enthusiasts continues to make annual donations toward our cause.

This year they were exceptionally generous with a donation of \$1,143.50. Their outgoing President, Gary (seen in the far left photo) can be seen with a proud grin on his face. AZB4K President, Carole Wilsey (left) matches his grin with a shocked smile as she reads the amount on the check.

This group is always a joy. It amazes me how deep they continue to dig into their pockets for us year after year. As an extra giving act of kindness, a previous winner of a blanket auction presented that blanket back to us in perfect condition. They asked that we use it to generate even more support for our cause.

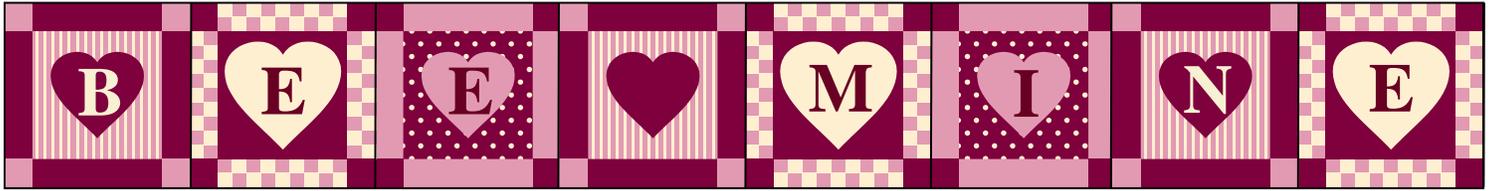
Not only do they donate to our group, but they always invite us to join in their raffles and giveaways. I won a beautiful Christmas candle and part of a 50/50 raffle! Thanks again to our friends in the F Troop!

Loving Donation of Blankets from Mesa East Stake

Our heartfelt thanks go out to the Relief Society from Mesa East Stake. Their efforts began as a project to make 125 blankets in honor of their 125th anniversary. To their surprise, the total number of blankets donated was 380.

Many of the blankets were the fun, soft fleece prints that kids love so much. Some can be seen below with bright, bold hearts printed on them. Thanks to these sweet ladies for their time and tenderness in giving to our Arizona kids!



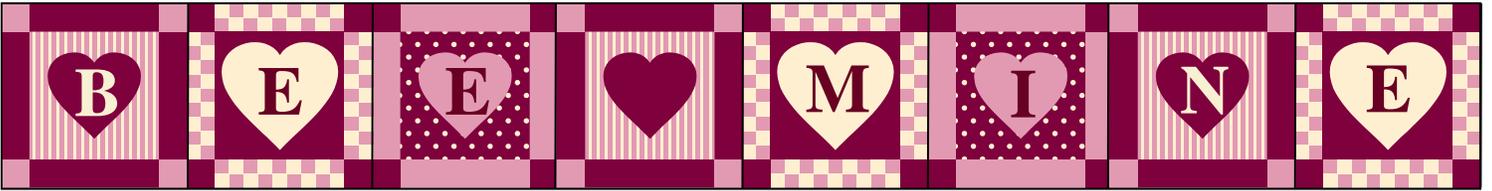


Full Fall Bee at Chandler Police Department

Our Chandler PD in October was full of fun, friends, and winners. We had three raffled wall hangings and a door prize winner as well. A special thank you to our annual traveling

visitor, Carol Pettis (below left) with her pile of donated quilts. This bee netted over 600 blankets! Thanks to all our volunteers for showing up and sewing up!





Below and below right are more busy quilters from the Weaver's Needle Bee in Apache Junction.

Thanks ladies for giving back to the community and especially for giving to our AZ kids.



Weaver's Needle Bee

We enjoyed meeting a new group of quilter's on Friday, January 18, 2008 as they hosted a bee at their facility in Apache Junction. Twenty-eight talented women brought their sewing machines or hand sewing skills and completed 45 quilts.

Congratulations to Colleen Jensen (left) who won the door prize of a basket filled with fat quarters and various sewing supplies.

Our hosts provided coffee in the morning and we all shared in a salad potluck luncheon which included desserts. Yum! The facility was nice and bright and we hope to visit again in the future.



Holiday Village Bee

Below and left below show volunteers at the Holiday Village Bee. We were busy with bees in January with the Holiday Village Bee on January 26th.



Ladies at the Holiday Village Bee covered the full gamut of blanket construction. In the upper left photo you'll see ladies outside, spraying the quilt layers together. Directly above you see pressing, cutting and layering. And finally, to the right we have some hand tying and great smiling going on. We love that!

Techniques, Tips & Tricks We *Love* to Share

Many of our quilter volunteers may already be familiar with this stitch. It is a blanket making favorite. This stitch is far and away the favorite of our sewers. You can use it for machine quilting and binding. It's forgiving, fun and fast!

This past year has been good to us in the form of fabric donations. We received an especially generous donation of fleece in many colors, prints and sizes. This fleece was used in many blankets as the batting and backing. We simply sprayed the regular cotton quilt tops together with the fleece and finished as usual with machine quilting and binding.

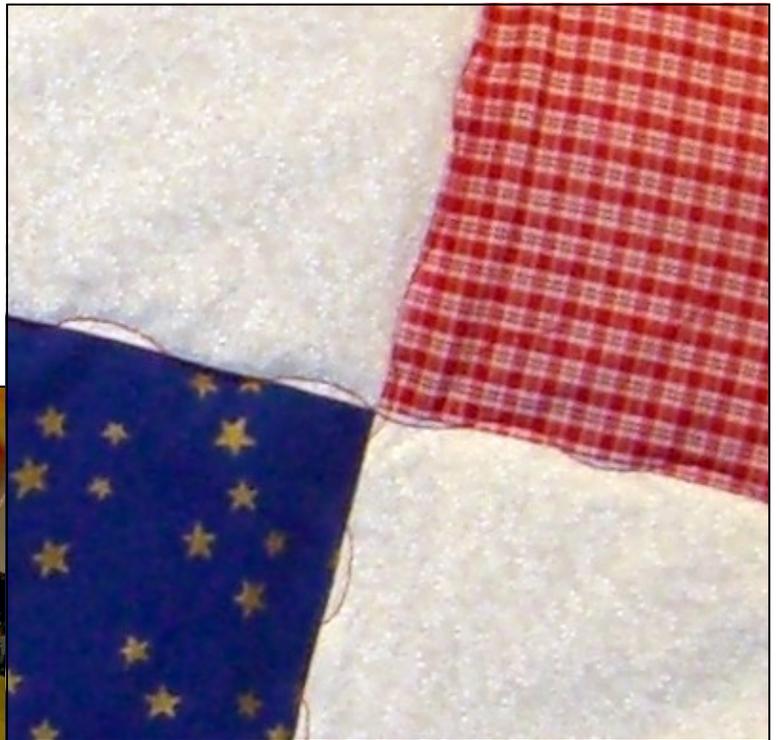
If you've never tried machine quilting, I highly recommend starting with this method. Layer a simple block quilt top with a nice, soft piece of fleece and spray glue it to stabilize during quilting. Use our favorite serpentine stitch in the ditch (see photo to the right). Always start in the middle of the quilt and work your way out. This stitch wanders from one side of the ditch to the other so you don't have to be perfect. You can set the stitch, lower the feed dog and put the pedal to the metal.

Many of our volunteers love to get out their beautiful variegated thread for this. It adds a layer of color and keeps your eyes moving across the quilt to take in all the different fabric patterns and colors. After you've finished quilting, trim the edges of the quilt top and backing (and batting if you have that layer) to prepare for the binding.

Binding is another thing we love the look of but don't like the time it takes to bind by hand. Well, this super serpentine stitch can be used to machine bind too! Prepare your binding as usual. We typically use a 2.5" strip folded in half.

Instead of sewing the binding on the top and finishing by hand on the back; do the reverse. Use your straight stitch to sew the binding on the back (a scant quarter inch from the edge). Roll the creased edge to the front so it covers the straight stitch you used to attach it (see bottom left photo).

Match your thread color to the binding (or use a nice contrast pulling from a color in the quilt top). Use the serpentine stitch along the edge of the binding. Try to keep the outside edge of the serpentine within the width of the binding. If it goes onto the quilt top in some areas, don't worry. The stitch is still strong and the binding isn't going anywhere.



Carole's *Caring* Cuddle Corner - "Happy Old Year!"



Here's to a great 2008!

I'd like to replay a little of our accomplishments in 2007. You all were tremendously important in making 2007 a "Banner Year"!!

Bees, Board and Business

We had 5 quilting bees with a total of 1,667 blankets donated or completed at the bees. This total includes preemie blankets. Distribution delivered 6,380 blankets total. Our Board filled the positions of Bee Coordinator and Publicity with two wonderful volunteers (thanks to Barb Middleton and Judy Babcock). Three newsletters were published and multiple e-mails were sent to increase communication with our volunteers. We continue an ongoing effort to save money and trees by replacing our paper newsletters (printed in black and white) with an online version that you can view and print in full color. Online viewing also saves us the rising cost of postage, so thanks to all of you who provided e-mail addresses so we could let you know when to view the latest newsletter.

Agencies Old and New

Two new agencies were added: CAAFA (Community Alliance Against Family Abuse) in Apache Junction and Florence Crittenton. CAAFA is dedicated to serving individuals toward living a life free of domestic abuse. They are committed to protecting and supporting those affected by domestic abuse. Florence Crittenton is a non-profit organization that has served the state's youth and their families for more than a century. They provide services, education and community-based programs to help children and teens overcome the issues of abuse, neglect, teen pregnancy or mental health problems. We also increased our donations to Desert Banner NICU and pediatrics. Banner Gateway Medical Center, which opened in Gilbert in September of 2007, is Banner Health's newest state-of-the-art hospital. Their NICU has approached us about receiving blankets when they are settled.

Change Is Good

AZ Blankets 4 Kids switched from enveloping blankets to spraying blankets for machine quilting at our bees. This incurs additional expense and the addition of binding, but there is no comparison when it comes to quality and a beautifully finished blanket.

We have received many heartfelt Thank You cards from agencies and parents of recipients of our blankets. This is so rewarding and validates that by giving AZB4K your blankets, you are making the world a little brighter, safer, and comforting to the children most in need. I've said it before and I'll keep on repeating it:

“Every blanket you make is someone's comfort and treasure!”



October 20, 2007
Chandler Police Dept.

37 - Attendees

301 - Blankets Donated at the Door
 (including 115 preemies!)

318 - Blankets Completed at the Bee

January 18, 2008
Weaver's Needle
 (Apache Junction)

35 - Attendees

33 - Blankets Donated at the Door
 (including 12 preemies)

45 - Blankets Completed at the Bee

Blanket Drop-off Locations:

A Quilter's Oasis

9963 E. Baseline Rd., #105
Mesa (480) 354-4077

Bernina SW Sewing Center

7143 E. Southern Ave., #135
Mesa (480) 964-8914

Cottonfields Quilt and Knit

12409 W. Indian School Rd.
Avondale (623) 535-1200

Cutting Edge Quiltworks

1949 W. Ray Rd., #33
Chandler (480) 857-3443

Quilter's Bee

7549 W. Cactus Rd.
Peoria (623) 334-9359

Quilter's Koop

5053 E. Elliot Rd.
Phoenix (480) 785-0710

Quilter's Ranch

1030 E. Baseline Rd., #178
Tempe (480) 838-8350

QuiltZ

13825 N. 32nd St.
Phoenix (602) 482-4141

Sun Valley Quilts

9857 W. Bell Rd.
Sun City (623) 972-2091

Zoe's Trunk

2986 N. Alma School Rd., #4
Chandler (480) 857-4833

Upcoming Events

Saturday, February 23 from 9 to 3

La Hacienda Resort
1797 W. 28th Avenue, Apache Junction

Sunday, March 9 from 2 to 4

LPG White Elephant Auction
2550 S. Ellsworth Road, Mesa

3rd Thursday each Month from 9 to 3

Las Palmas Grand - Ballroom
2550 S. Ellsworth Road, Mesa

4th Thursday each Month from 10 to 4

Peace by Piece
Cutting Edge Quiltworks
1949 W. Ray Road, Chandler

1st Friday each Month from 10 to 4

Peace by Piece
Sally's Fabric Store
1235 E. Main Street, Mesa

Help us thank these shops for their support by giving them your patronage. Let's go shopping!

AZ Blankets 4 Kids, Inc.

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