



Azie's Blanket Coverage

May 2007 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 **2,781** blankets to various agencies that assist seriously ill and traumatized children during the months of January 2007 through April 2007.

Total deliveries from inception to date:

34,778!

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Contact us:

(480) 283-8746
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“So many quilts, so little time.”



Good Times in the Pines

The photo to the left was taken in 2005 at our Quilting Getaway to Emmanuel Pines Camp in Prescott. From left are Natalie, Kittie, Karen, Susan, Nancy, Carol and Sylvia. These are just a few of the faces you could see at camp this year. Can you believe our camp getaway is in its fourth year already?

This year's camp dates are August 17-19. The cost is \$150. Once again the camp is hosted by Cutting Edge Quiltworks. You can stop by the store or call in (480.857.3443) to get your name on the list. A deposit of \$75 is due by June 1 with final payment due July 1. At the time of printing, there were 6 of 30 total spots still available.

Your camp fee pays for 5 fabulous meals, 2 nights accommodations, and all the “fresh cooler” air you can breathe! There will be demonstrations and strip poker night too!

Country Quilters

Country Quilters of Country-side RV Park, in Apache Junction, held their annual Quilt Show on February 24. Rows and rows of beautiful quilts and quilted items were on display.

The group worked on mystery quilts each week. The result was a variety of color, giving each finished mystery pattern

a unique signature of its maker. It's always exciting to see how blocks of the same pattern can look so different from each other.

At the end of the show, the members presented AZ Blankets 4 Kids with several dozen large quilts, perfect for teens. Thank you Country Quilters!



Jean Middleton and Sunrise Village Quilters

Right:
Joan Most (left) and
Jean Middleton

Below:
A small taste
(mmm... cake) of
our appreciation for
Jean and the
Sunrise Village
Quilters.

Far Below:
A group photo on
the last sewing day
at Sunrise Village.



Blankets 4 Kids! In addition to the blankets, many of our volunteers have attended fund-raising auctions for the sheer entertainment value of Jean's husband, Ralph. His auctioneer skills raised money to help sewing groups buy supplies.

Speaking of supplies, the Sunrise Village Quilters donated their supplies (fabric, batting, irons, kits, etc.) to the group at Las Palmas Grand. And now for the really good news... they are close neighbors so we haven't seen the last of this dynamic duo (Jean and Ralph) or their merry band of do-gooders (Sunrise Village Quilters). Joan Most and the Las Palmas Grand group look forward to seeing them on the third Thursday of each month at LPG.

When I first heard this news, it was... Jean Middleton is retiring and the Sunrise Village Quilters are disbanding. Well, I'm a "cup is half full" kinda girl so I'll tell it my way.

Jean Middleton (Sunrise Village) and Joan Most (Las Palmas Grand) are joining forces! The Sunrise Village Quilters (led by Jean) have been making beautiful blankets for over ten years. In that time they've produced over three thousand blankets for AZ

I take back what I said earlier about the cup being half full. I think this cup is brimming over with energy and talent! We'll just see them at a new time in a new place. Thank you so much ladies (and gentleman) for your dedication and service to our cause! We'll see you soon at Las Palmas Grand!



Sun Valley Piecemakers Quilt Show



The Piecemakers Quilt Group of Sun Valley Park (in Apache Junction) held their annual Quilt Show on Sunday, March 4th. Many beautiful quilts made by members were on display.

Between making their own quilts, the group also found time to make several hundred blankets for AZB4K, which were also on display during the show.

These ladies gave blankets, preemies, booties, caps and some stuffed animals with a total of over 400 pieces! Each worked all year and kept their stash of blankets hidden away until the quilt show. It wasn't until the night before the show that they would find out how many would be on display.



Above: AZB4K friends and Sun Valley Piecemakers at their Quilt Show

Right: Alice Johnson (left) and daughter Sylvia Saffel admire a star at the show.

The photo above and left shows (l to r) Anne Brow, Doris Tannehill, Nancy Blackburn, Carole Willsey, Mary Duennes, Anne Fetz, Norma Cummings, Helen Peterson and Sylvia Saffel.

Thanks for the blankets, booties and bears and thanks for a fun day of viewing your gorgeous works of art!

Below: Janet Hallam (left) and Judy Savage display a "quilted" cake they made to celebrate seven years of the Sew N Sews. Yummers!



Boulder Ridge Sew N Sews

The Sew N Sews of Boulder Ridge, in north Phoenix, sew exclusively for AZ Blankets. They meet monthly and have donated many wonderful crocheted, knitted and quilted blankets.

In January of 2007 they celebrated their 7th year as volunteer sewers for AZB4K. Their group leaders are Janet Hallam and Carol Mabbit.

Janet hails from Colorado by way of Wyoming. Seven years ago she was a novice quilter who was mentored

by a neighbor who gave lessons. From this humble beginning the group has grown to 15 sewers.

Their work and dedication recently earned a Caring Community Award from the Block Watch Advisory Board in conjunction with Phoenix Police Department.

Our thanks and gratitude for your faithful service and we look forward to many more years of working together to serve the children of Arizona.

Thanks from Natalie

I am an employee at St. Joseph's Hospital - Child Life. One of my responsibilities is to pass out blankets to new patients and in doing so, I experience each day the joy that every single blanket brings to not only the child but the family too. It lets the family know that someone cares and makes them feel more at home here in the hospital. I frequently see patients who return to the hospital with the blanket we originally gave them. I have been told of a patient who went to college and took the blanket that was given to him from St. Joe's years earlier. These blankets mean so very much to so many people. To all those who contribute endless hours to making the blankets I want to say thank you. You play an important role in the care of the children here.



New Friends + New Location = La Hacienda Bee

Left:
Worker bees busy layering, pinning, stacking and packing at a new quilting hive in Apache Junction near Ironwood and the US60. We were happy to support our new bee hosts at La Hacienda RV Resort.



First we would like to say a big THANK YOU to Paulette Grassi and Mary Miller from La Hacienda. They organized a productive and fun bee! This is the first AZ Blankets Bee they've hosted, but not the last. Plans are already in progress to have another bee there on February 3, 2008. Keep checking our website and reading our newsletters for more details on this and other events.

We met from 9 to 3 on Saturday, March 17 in their wonderfully spacious Community Room. Everyone had lots of elbow room but were still within gabbing range of our fellow quilters. There were 44 people in attendance including 7 AZ Blankets board members and 24 new attendees.

La Hacienda Quilters came to the bee with 48 completed preemie blankets and 44 various child-sized quilts. They also had a couple dozen already begun!



These ladies didn't just start strong, they finished strong at the end of the day! There were 21 kits completed during the bee. A huge pile of 20 quilt tops already paired up with batting, backing, and binding were left with Mary Miller to longarm quilt over the summer. I can share with you that those quilts were completed even before the Summer officially began. Thanks Mary!

The totals for the day were 114 blankets donated at the door and another 78 finished throughout the day for a grand total of 192 blankets completed. Excellent work!

A few highlights of the day included:

- A delicious potluck salad lunch (see the picture below for the full drool effect)
- Our door prize winner was Sandra Ellsworth who must've had the luck of the Irish on her side (it was St. Patrick's Day after all)
- A quilter's toolbelt we all wanted the pattern for (Paulette and Mary were sporting these treasures)

Thanks La Hacienda Quilters for a great bee!



Above:
Paulette Grassi models her too cool quilter's toolbelt

Far Left:
Our lucky doorprize winner, Sandra Ellsworth

Left:
Super yummy potluck salad bar (these ladies can cook & quilt!)

Old Friends + New Location = Desert Breeze Bee



We're reporting on two new venues in this edition of our newsletter. Our "usual" Chandler PD venue is still an option for us, but the new location seemed like a good space with a little more room. It's located just North of Chandler Blvd. between Rural Rd. and McClintock Drive. We were set up inside the Community Room of the Chandler PD Desert Breeze Sub-Station.

We met on Saturday, February 17, still trying to keep the theme of love alive from the recent Valentine's Day. There were 35 hard working blanket makers and 16 AZ Blankets board/committee members pouring their hearts into this bee. Everyone was given a small quilted bee card as a favor and thanks for giving of their time and talents that day. The cards read "Thanks for Beeing Here!" on the inside.

Other quilted greeting cards (like the one shown above) were for sale at the bee for \$5 each. If you have a special request for cards at future bees, please send an e-mail to info@azblankets4kids.com and we'll do our best to accommodate you.

We had not just one, but three door prizes to give away. There was a basket of fabric and sewing goodies, a beaded scissor marker, and two fabric cases.

There were a whopping 305 blankets counted and bagged for distribution at this bee! Of those, 246 were donated at the door (146 blankets and 100 preemie-size). The remaining 59 quilts were completed during the bee. Sweet!

It can be a little tricky trying new locations, but this one seemed to suit us well. We even managed to set up a kit making party on and around the distribution table. This is my favorite task... laying out blocks of every color and pattern to put together in a kit. It's always fun to see someone working on it at a future bee and watch it come together just how you imagined it.

Many thanks to all our loyal volunteers for meeting us in a new place to do the same old thing that we always do because we love it so much. We know it takes extra effort to find us and maybe even a longer drive but we appreciate you more than words can say.



Above:
A volunteer finishes an adorable dog theme quilt.



Left:
Ever smiling Marilyn Clever.



Below:
All tied up at the tying table with Dorothy.



February 17, 2007

**Chandler Police Dept.
Desert Breeze Sub-Station**
Chandler

51 - Attendees

246 - Blankets Donated at the Door
(including 100 preemies!)

59 - Blankets Completed at the Bee

March 17, 2007

La Hacienda Quilters
Apache Junction

44 - Attendees

114 - Blankets Donated at the Door

78 - Blankets Completed at the Bee

Four New Patterns Online

I'd like to take a quick moment to brag. I think AZ Blankets has one of the best collections of quilt patterns around. Our own Sylvia Saffell organizes these patterns into clear and concise instructions. We now have 41 patterns available on our website (paper copies available during our bees).

Sylvia has recently added four new patterns to keep you from getting bored with the same old thing. My favorite of these four patterns is called Picture Frames Quilt. It's a fun one to highlight medium motifs. The online pattern contains instructions to make the blanket as infant to teen size.

Do you have a big scrap fabric stash in your sewing room? We have just the pattern to use for that! It's called Patches of Scraps and is sized for an older child. This pattern is a cross between scrappy bricks and scrappy squares. Does anyone remember the video game called Tetris? I think this pattern would be perfect to make your own Tetris-styled blanket. You could even lay out the blocks from the bottom up and imagine you are playing the game. Have fun with it!

Finally we have two time-saver patterns for you. It's a pattern you've seen before but with bigger bricks to help you build faster. The scrappy version is called Big Bricks and the 4 fabric version is called Four Block Big Bricks, each from infant to teen.

Bee Helpful

We've had a nice little bee break while the temperature adjusted to its triple-digit summer numbers, but we're ready to get back to work! Join us on Saturday, June 23, for our next blanket bee at beautiful Las Palmas Grand. We admit this is one of our favorite bee hosts because we are usually spoiled by some handsome husband chefs.

There is one thing we'd like to ask of you that would be helpful... when attending any of our bees, bring your walking foot. We've begun a process that seems to be working well. At the end of each bee we take home tens of blankets that are layered in tops, batting and backs. Between bees we have a spray angel (Nancy Blackburn) who sprays those layers together so they are ready for you to finish at the next bee.

We typically place a blanket that needs to be finished at each sewing station at the beginning of the bee. Most blankets quilt up nicely using a stitch in the ditch or curvy, serpentine stitch. Roll the blanket so you start in the middle and you'll have the quilting done in no time at all.

This method helps us make sturdy, beautiful blankets ready to go into the hands of our kids. Your hard work will endure their hugs and tugs and cuddles for years to come.

All About Our Board

When I speak as "we" in this newsletter I'm usually speaking on behalf of the AZ Blankets 4 Kids Board of Directors. Sometimes I forget that you may not know who we are so I'd like to fix that and introduce you to "us"...

First you should know that we are an all volunteer organization and that includes the Board. I'll begin with our awesome officers: Carole Willsey (President), Sylvia Saffell (Vice President), Marilyn Clever (Secretary) and Karen Johnston (Treasurer). From here we branch off into committees and more specialized duties.

The largest committee puts in tons of volunteer hours each year. I say tons because they carry the load of blanket distribution and it can get heavy! They are Mary Duennes, Barbara Eckles, and Bunnie Williams.

The rest of our members in no particular order are: Barb Middleton (Bee Coordinator), Judy Babcock (Publicity), Phyllis Akins (Premie Blanket Coordinator), Nancy Blackburn (Kit Coordinator), Vicky Varga (Newsletter), Nina Williams (Scrapbook), Susan Quisenberry (Volunteer Records/Roster) and me, Kelli Nemece (Webmaster/Newsletter).

Join us! We're always looking for more Board volunteers!



Bits N Pieces

This little article is my catch-all. It's full of the bits 'n pieces that don't require a full story but need to be communicated none the less.

Our blanket drop-off sites often receive wonderful donations from our volunteers with no note inside. Please include your name and address with donations so we can send you a note of thanks. For those of you who wish to remain anonymous, we offer a big thank you for all you do.

Speaking of blanket drop-off sites... Cutting Edge Quiltworks has moved! Don't panic, it's not far. They're just around the corner from their previous location. Stop by soon and check out the new space (and lots of it!). Special thanks to Natalie and Kittie for continuing their roles as our camp champs! Only 6 spots of 30 total spaces are left so give them a call and make your reservation today!

Peace by Piecers are holding steady at their light speed pace. This group meets twice monthly at two locations, one in Mesa and one in Tempe. And if that's not enough, Wanda just invited the group to her house for a kit cutting party! Thanks so much for giving our volunteers so many options to do good work for AZ Blankets 4 Kids.

All of you make all of us look so good! Thank you!

Preemie Blanket Tips & Guidelines



These blankets are tiny expressions of love and merit a special degree of quality and workmanship. We always appreciate the time and effort put into making blankets for our kids. Please take a moment to read the following tips and guidelines so your preemie blankets will provide them with TLC.

Check the AZB4K website for patterns. These blankets are made with cotton tops and flannel backs only. If you knit or crochet, please donate blankets from infant to teen sizes.

The finished size of our preemie blankets should be 18" square and consist of face and backing layers (no batting is used). Face fabric can be either 100% cotton or flannel. Backing fabric should be 100% cotton flannel in either solid color or small motif print.

Both face and backing should be 18 1/2" prior to combining. The two layers are sewn together with right sides facing, using 1/4" seam. Be sure to leave an opening (at least 4") to facilitate turning inside out. After turning, press

carefully so backing fabric is not visible around edges. Close opening by carefully hand stitching so no thread loops can get caught on tiny fingers and toes.

Minimal quilting is requested to protect the baby's ultra-sensitive skin. Do not quilt within the center 12" portion of the quilt. If the quilt has a square pieced center, stitch in the ditch at the seam between the center and the border. Otherwise sew a continuous seam, approximately 1/2" from the edges of the quilt. **Please do not stitch diagonal lines from corner to corner.**

Sew a label on the FRONT of the quilt, on either the lower left or lower right corner. Position the label approximately 3/8" from the quilt's side and bottom edges. This can be hand sewn or applied by machine using a straight stitch sewn 1/8" inside the label's edge. If using your machine, load white thread in the needle and bobbin. If you apply the label to the quilt face before attaching the front to the back, please position the label allowing for 1/4" seam allowance (5/8" from side and bottom edges).



Fabric 4-1-1

Ok groups, here's the 411 on fabric... we have lots of it! If your group sews for AZ Blankets 4 Kids and needs cotton for quilt tops, let us know.

You can send an e-mail to info@azblankets4kids.com or leave a detailed message on our blanket line at (480) 283-8746.

Maybe your group would like to get together for a kit cutting party?

We've recently had several large donations of quality fabric. It's not all child friendly prints but don't forget about our teen recipients who might prefer more casual and less kiddie.

Our focus is always on the final outcome and we want this fabric to find its way into your hands so it can get into the hands of our deserving kids as quickly as possible.

Carole's Cuddle Corner - "Tips for Better Blankets"



As the current AZB4K President, I want to thank all our volunteers for a fantastic spring. We've had three wonderful bees!

Here's a little bit about me... I am a native Arizonan; born in Holbrook. I really grew up all over the U.S. but came back to Arizona for college. I've been here ever since. I am married with 4 grown children and 10 grandchildren. I was a school teacher in the Mesa Public Schools system. A very close friend turned me on to quilting and it led to this marvelous organization.

Tip: #1

All our quilt tops should be sewn with 1/4" seams. This saves fabric and makes the top less bulky. The seams should be pressed together toward the darkest fabric. Pressing the seams leads to a flatter, more pleasing quilt top.

Pressing with the iron should be an up and down motion rather than a pushing back and forth. Pushing back and forth stretches the fabric and can cause your quilt to ripple. So it is an UP and DOWN motion.

It seems awkward at first but the results are worth it.

Tip: #2

Adding borders:

Press and square up your quilt top. Since most tops are rectangular, add borders to the sides first. Measure the length three times (side, middle, other side) to get an average measurement for the side borders.

Cut your borders to equal this average and sew onto the sides of the top. Then measure again. This time get an average measurement for the width (across the top, middle, bottom). Cut top and bottom borders to equal this measurement and sew on. Press. This system helps alleviate the rippling affect that many quilts get.

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

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

AZ Blankets 4 Kids, Inc.

P. O. Box 11206

Tempe, AZ 85284-0021

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Upcoming Events

Saturday, June 23 from 9 to 3

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

Friday, August 17 - Sunday, August 19

AZB4K Quilt Camp
Call Cutting Edge Quiltworks
to reserve your space today!

Saturday, October 20 from 9 to 3

Chandler PD Community Room
250 E. Chicago, Chandler

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
Westside Multigenerational Ctr.
715 W. 5th Street, Tempe

1st Friday each Month from 10 to 4

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