



Azie's Blanket Coverage

May 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 **3,724** blankets to various agencies that assist seriously ill and traumatized children during the months of January 2008 through April 2008.

Total deliveries from inception to date :

43,946!

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Contact us:

(480) 283-8746
info@azblankets4kids.com
www.azblankets4kids.com



Peace by Piece

The Peace by Piece Quilters are a busy bunch. They hold two sewing bees each month. Every fourth Thursday they meet at Cutting Edge Quiltworks in Chandler. Every first Friday they meet at Sally's Fabric Store in Mesa.

Because these are traveling bees, their leader has to be full of energy and passion for our cause. Luckily, they have exactly that in Wanda Dix (above right).

Wanda packs her treasure chests (above middle) and takes them, along with a car packed full of other items required to keep her volunteers busy sewing, cutting, snacking and socializing.



On their site you can even find some of those favorite recipes.

Join them and find out what's buggin' Nina Williams (left). She's showing a bright bug jar quilt.

Peace by Piecers just celebrated their fourth anniversary sewing for AZ Blankets. In those four years, they have made over 1,400 quilts! Wow! Congratulations ladies and thank you so much. Special thanks to Wanda for taking this show on the road two times each month. You're our hero!

Wanda's bees are productive and fun. She always has snacks and favorite recipes to swap with friends. She maintains a website and e-mail newsletter every month. Check it out at:

www.peacebypiecequilters.org



CAAFA Quilt

CAAFA stands for Community Alliance Against Family Abuse. Their mission is to empower individuals, families and communities affected by domestic abuse.

CAAFA is passionate about domestic violence prevention, self-esteem, and healthy relationship training. They conduct a holistic prevention program with psychoeducational support groups, pet assisted therapy, one on one counseling, recreational activities, yoga, and expressive arts therapy. It is the first and only program of its kind in Arizona.

On Saturday, February 23, at our La Hacienda Bee, we were delighted to have Kim Van Nimwegen (above right) as a special guest speaker. Kim is a Director of Prevention with CAAFA. This organization was founded by 3 women who were keeping a friend safe. They purchased a little house built in the 30s as the first CAAFA shelter. In 5 years they had built a facility with 16 beds.

Most of the women and children CAAFA serve arrive in the middle of the night with just the clothes on their backs. They are afraid and have nowhere else to go.

Kim contacted a member of AZ Blankets 4 Kids and requested blank white fabric squares to use as part of her expressive arts therapy. When children would come in for counseling and have problems expressing their feelings, she would give them a square and fabric markers and they could do whatever they liked with their block.

When the blocks were ready for assembly, Sylvia Saffel (above left) put the quilt top together and Mary Miller (above middle) did the long-arm machine quilting. Kim now uses the quilt as an awareness tool at events.



CAAFA is a recipient agency of our blankets. The blankets are used in various ways. They could be used as a raffle item for a Healthy Relationships Bingo prize. They are used as a teaching aid with discussion about the pieces of their lives and how they can choose which pieces to keep and which to let go. The pieces they keep are brought together to make something beautiful (just like their quilt). They may be asked to choose a blanket for someone else so they have the opportunity to express thanks. When children are given the option of choosing an item to keep, they almost always choose a quilt.



Overcoming the Impact of Domestic Violence

In this newsletter, we're highlighting two agencies who are recipients of our blankets... Sojourner Center and CAAFA. Both help victims of domestic violence. Sojourner Center's mission is to overcome the impact of domestic violence, one life at a time. Their goal is to increase safety, as well as promote empowerment and self-sufficiency for all program participants.

Their services include safe shelter, food and clothing at two emergency shelter facilities, safety planning, domestic violence awareness and education classes for women and children,

case management, a licensed and nationally accredited child care and pre-school facility, 24-hour crisis hotline and referral service, community education services, employment and education assistance, lay-legal advocacy, transitional housing for families leaving shelter and continuing support for families beyond their shelter stay.

With a total of 280 beds, Sojourner Center is the largest domestic violence shelter in the nation. This year the organization will serve more than 2,450 women and children who are escaping violent homes.

- 1 out of every 4 women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime.
- Every 44 minutes in Arizona, one or more children witness a domestic violence incident.
- In 2005, Phoenix police officers responded to over 14,000 domestic violence calls: 18 of those were homicides.
- Approximately 50% of the calls Sojourner Center receives for shelter are turned away due to lack of bed space.

These statistics are heart-breaking. Thank you all so very much for your time and talents in making heart-healing blankets for these kids.

Arizona Women's Partnership

Arizona Women's Partnership is a non-profit organization established to assist small grass roots charities that help underserved women and children at risk. AWP raises money through donations, corporate sponsorships and its annual Wine, Women & Jazz FUNdraiser.

This year's FUNdraiser was held at the Arizona Culinary Institute in Scottsdale on April 26th. The event featured jazz divas: Margo Reed, Delphine Cortez and Blaise Lantana along with sumptuous hors d'oeuvres, desserts, fine wine and a silent auction.

The silent auction featured a painting donated on behalf of AZ Blankets 4 Kids by artist Gretchen Matta. Our deepest gratitude goes out to Gretchen for kindness and generosity.

This year, AZ Blankets 4 Kids is one of 10 grant recipients which are selected annually by an application and review process. Other recipients include Girls on the Run (Phoenix Metro), Haven Family Resource Center, Inc. (Lake Havasu), Make Way for Books (Tucson), Payson Community Kids (Payson), SEEDS: Women in Transition (Phoenix Metro), The Welcome to America Project for Refugees (Scottsdale), Unlimited Potential, Inc. (Phoenix), Women 4 Change at Perryville Prison (Goodyear), and Y.E.S. for Navajo Youth - Dine Bikeyah (Teec Nos Pos).

Thanks to Arizona Women's Partnership for their time and energy making these grants possible.

The efforts of AWP and all their grant recipients are proof of what anthropologist Margaret Mead once said:

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world - indeed it's the only thing that ever has.”



Scrappy Butterflies

Keep an eye out for a new feature on the back of each newsletter. On the cover of our last newsletter (February 2008), we featured Barb's scrappy bears. This creative use of scraps is fun and colorful and makes the most use of our fabulous fabrics.

This time we've gone from bear to butterfly. Each newsletter will feature a new shape for you to use with your scrappy fabric panels. They will soon be available on our website as well so check back often. Please e-mail us photos of your scrappy quilts too!

www.azblankets4kids.com



La Hacienda RV Resort Bee

On February 23, we spent another fun and productive day with our hosts at La Hacienda. With 62 people in attendance, we had a full auditorium of whirring sewing machines and busy ladies. The weather was nice enough to set up a spraying station outside as well. All this productivity added up to a grand total of 571 blankets ready to deliver at the end of the day!

In the photo below, Sylvia Saffell (left) presents the door prize to new quilter, Aline Siao (right). Aline completed her first quilt during the bee and it was a beautiful Conversation Brick pattern. Congratulations and nice work!



One of our favorite parts of this event is always the amazing food that shows up at the potluck luncheon. Everything was delicious! However, the favorite item by far had to be the carrot, raisin mini muffins that had been baked on site that morning. The room was filled with the scent of these scrumptious treats!

We've received so many requests for the recipe, we decided to include it in our newsletter. Thanks so much to Mary Miller for providing it.

We also had a special guest speaker at this bee. Her name is Kim Van Nimwegen and she is a Director of Prevention with CAAFA. If you read Page 2, you already know all of this. If you haven't read it, turn back now. It's a great story where our volunteers help provide the happy ending.

Bran Flax Muffins

1½ cups all-purpose flour	1½ cups finely shredded carrots
¾ cup flaxseed meal	2 peeled & shredded apples
¾ cup oat bran	½ cup raisins
1 cup brown sugar	1 cup chopped nuts
2 teaspoons baking soda	¾ cup milk
1 teaspoon baking powder	2 beaten eggs
½ teaspoon salt	1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 teaspoons cinnamon	2 Tbsp. oil

Mix together flour, flaxseed, oat bran, brown sugar, baking soda, baking powder, salt and cinnamon in large bowl. Stir in carrots, apples, raisins, and nuts. Combine milk, beaten eggs, vanilla, and oil. Pour liquid ingredients into dry ingredients. Stir until ingredients are moistened. DO NOT OVER MIX.

Fill muffin cups ¾ full. Bake at 350° for 15-20 minutes.

Makes 15 servings

LDS Riggs 3rd Ward Bee in Chandler

This bee was a last-minute entry on our calendar and we were so happy for it. This sweet sisterhood with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was such a treat to work with. The ladies chose AZ Blankets as one of their regular service projects. Special thanks to Jennifer Hoskins and Debbie Crismon for hosting a great day!

Most of the ladies within this group were novices to quilting, but you wouldn't know it from their enthusiasm. Many volunteers were doing hand work (tying or sewing on labels). A few even started from scratch with brand new sewing machines out of the box that day. The room was buzzing with teachers, students and smiles.

Our hosts provided BBQ beef sandwiches for lunch in addition to a yummy salad potluck. They also provided snacks throughout the day. Mary Miller brought us more of the mini muffins too... Mmm. Another quick thanks to Mary for her kind donation of two 20½" x 20½" quilting rulers. They are a joy to use!

Once again, the weather was nice enough for us to set up a spraying station outside. So this bee was a busy one. Be sure to read Carole's Cuddle Corner on Page 7 for more about how our bees are set up. It's quite a production when you list all the steps required to complete a single blanket.

She also tells about visiting Brownie Troop 788 from Ahwatukee. They toured all the stations of the bee and presented AZ Blankets with a monetary gift earned from their cookie sales. Thanks girls!

Since I'm thanking girls, let's not forget the busy young ladies in the photo below. They tied several quilts throughout the day. Excellent!



Congratulations to Allie Watkins (left). She was the winner of our door prize.

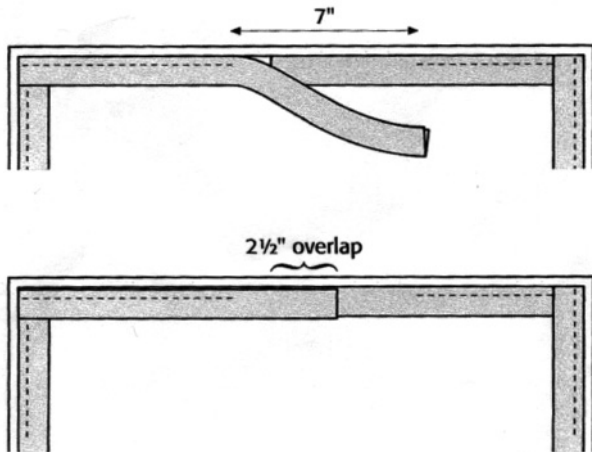
And let's celebrate another new quilter (above). I'm sorry I don't have her name, but she did a great job on this bright and cheery Four Patch pattern. It's lovely!



Are You In A Bind Over Binding?... 4 Easy Steps to a Fabulous Finish

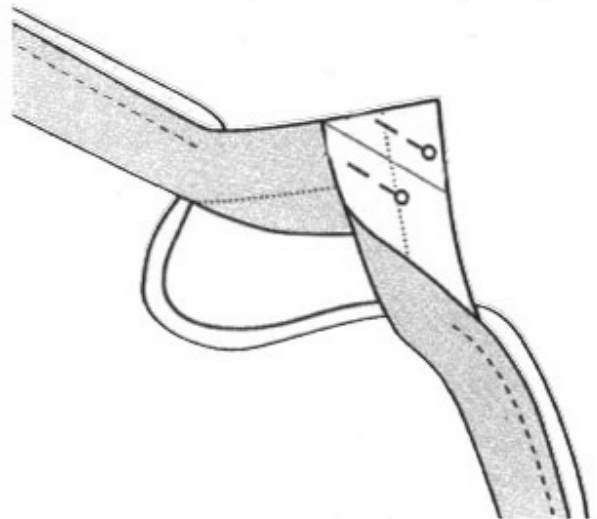
Step 1:

Sew your binding to the front of your quilt as you would normally do. Stop stitching about 7" from where you began. Overlap the end of the binding tail with the starting tail. Trim the binding ends with a perpendicular cut so the overlap is exactly the same distance as the cut width of your binding strips. So, if your binding strips are 2½" wide, the overlap should be 2½". Cut on the inside of your measurement line. It's easier to pull the fabric smooth than deal with bunched excess material.



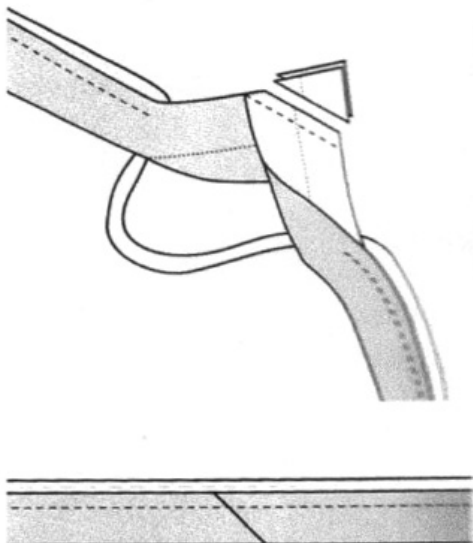
Step 2:

Open both ends of the folded binding. Place the tails right sides together so they join to form a right angle as shown below. Pin the binding tails together and mark a diagonal stitching line from corner to corner.



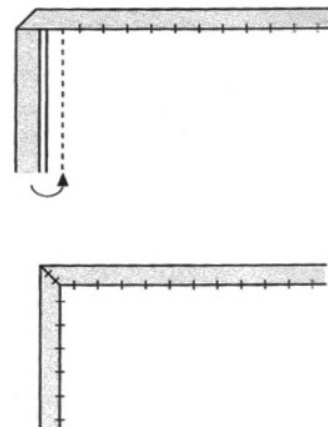
Step 3:

Stitch the binding tails together on the marked line. Check the fit of the binding before you trim the seam allowance. Be sure the right sides were together and the right angle was sewn. Trim the seam allowance and press the seam open. Refold the binding and align the edges with the raw edges of the quilt. Finish sewing it in place.



Step 4:

Fold the binding to the back of the quilt to cover the machine stitching line. Hand stitch in place mitering the corners.



Super Duper Easy, No Hand Stitching Option:

Do all steps the same but begin by sewing your binding to the back of your quilt with a scant ¼" seam allowance. On step 4, work from the front of your quilt and machine stitch at the edge of the creased binding. You can use a straight stitch or add a fun serpentine stitch, blanket stitch or other decorative stitches that you've been looking for an excuse to use. It's fast, fun and durable!

Carole's Cuddle Corner and Anatomy Lesson

Brownie Troop 788 of the Starlight neighborhood in Phoenix visited our April 12 quilting bee. The group of 6 and 7 year old girls under the leadership of Rachel Gallelo presented AZB4K with two fleece quilts and a monetary donation. Their monetary donation was earned by selling Girl Scout Cookies. Their leaders are teaching the girls social responsibility as well as the gift of giving! Bee volunteers showed the girls the steps necessary to produce and finish a blanket. We hope they all left with the desire to learn quilting and become future volunteers. Thank you so much Brownie Troop 788!



Anatomy of a Bee

The dictionary defines anatomy as the parts that make up an animal or plant. What are the parts that make up a quilting bee? Some of our new quilting volunteers are mystified by the rush and bustle of our bees. Ideally, the parts consist of sewing a quilt top, finding a back, adding batting, spray with an adhesive so the three parts stay together, machine quilt or tie the blanket, add binding and a label. At a bee all these things are going on simultaneously.



Between bees we receive finished tops and sometimes finished tops with backs. From previous bees we usually have batted and sprayed blankets needing to be machine quilted or tied and we have blankets that need binding and labeling. We also bring child size kits and preemie kits to start new blankets.

Volunteers with sewing machines will be machine quilting, adding binding, sewing on labels, or making a new top. There are tables for volunteers who don't bring sewing machines who tie blankets or hand sew on labels. The cutting tables are for cutting additional fabric pieces needed for quilt tops, cutting backs, measuring and squaring up quilt tops, or squaring up and removing excess batting after blankets have been quilted or tied.

Recently we have been trying to sandwich blankets with batting and spray them with an adhesive at bees. This only works if the weather is nice, no wind, and there is space to do this outside. This way the blankets can immediately be added to the machine quilting or tying process. Next, binding strips are cut and sewn around the edges of the blankets. Our binding is 2½" by the width of the fabric; using 5 strips per blanket. Finally, the blanket gets an AZB4K label.

The last step is taking the completed blankets to our distribution table. Our distribution volunteers check blankets for completeness and forgotten pins, then place them into bags by size for toddler, child or teen recipients.

Now, mix this all together; add all levels of sewers and volunteers and visitors and you get an AZB4K Quilting Bee.



February 23, 2008
La Hacienda RV Resort
 Apache Junction

62 - Attendees

571 - Total blankets from this event

April 12, 2008
LDS Church Bee
 Chandler

59 - Attendees

483 - Total blankets from this event

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

Upcoming Events

Saturday, June 21 from 9 to 3

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

Saturday, June 28 from 9 to 4

Prickly Piecers Bee
Fire Station Community Room
4110 E. Chandler Blvd., Phoenix

Saturday, October 18 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
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