

Favorite quotes from the Dowager Countess of Downton Abbey:

"I couldn't have electricity in the house, I wouldn't sleep a wink. All those vapors floating about."



February 28, 2014

Weather forecasters need a window, not a computer, when predicting the weather for the day. Not the week. Just the day.

For example, I'm driving to work and catch the weather forecast for the day on the radio. Sunny, mid 40s, for the day. I'm driving through foggy mist, no sun in sight and it's 32 degrees. That forecast wouldn't bother me much if it were 7 a.m. It's not. It's 10.

And to just make sure that I'm reporting this correctly, I check the radio's web page to see if I can find the weather forecast. I don't find that one. But on the radio's web page, there is a link to the Weather Channel, which says it's cloudy, 28 degrees and there is a severe weather alert. Sigh. If you are reading this on Friday, February 28, I can tell you that it is cloudy, slightly breezing and cold. I'm looking out of my window.

But I told you I wanted to talk about this dragon game I've been playing on my iPad. Okay, you can all quit gasping. I'm a not-so closet computer gamer. It started when a friend of mine had a Tandy computer. She had a game called Kings Quest II. A little pixelized guy walked through screens and interacted with other characters. The game was based on fairy tales so if you knew your Grimm stories, you could figure out the puzzles. It was a little more advanced than pacman.

So when I got my first computer - way back in the late 1980s--I immediately bought a game. Got home, loaded it up and my PC wasn't powerful enough. I had bought the biggest baddest home computer on the market. Which means that in terms of today, the computer had about the power of a watch battery. But the computer wasn't big enough to power both the game and its windows-styled interface (pre Bill Gates). It was a memory thing. So to run the game, I had to close off the desktop and start the game in dos. Remember dos? Probably not.

Anyway, what I learned from all of this was that computer games were driving the need for more powerful computers. And never buy a computer that can't run the latest game. Even if you don't play.

Today the games are huge. And on line. Computer games have always been time sucks, but now they tend to put you in a different time zone. So to speak. So I quit playing, other than things like scrabble or those candy crunch bejeweled sort of games while waiting in doc offices. Candy Crush, BTW, is making an initial public offering for stock in its company. Last year's revenue was \$1.9 billion with a profit of about \$568 million, despite offering games for free. Candy Crush says it has about 93 million average daily players, who play the game more than 1 billion times a day. That's what - 10 different times each day per player? Is that the right math?

So how does the free game make \$568 million a year? By selling "virtual" items to its

players - the company says a small number of players. For example, you can buy 3 extra plays for a buck, for that situation where you need just 3 more plays to finish the level. It's amazing, though, how many times you just need 3 more plays. Makes you wonder if the games are programmed that way.....

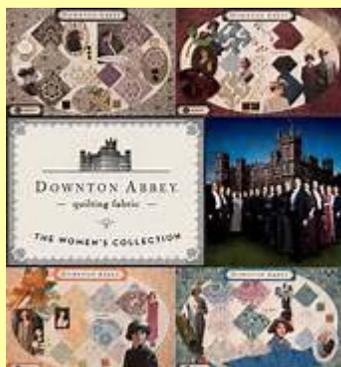
Or you can pay \$50 to buy enough rubies to purchase 1 item of armor for your dragon -- you need 4 or 5 pieces before it can fly. Remember the dragon, which started this whole conversation? I'm always on the lookout for something else to distract me and waste my time. So I downloaded a free game involving dragons. It's kinda like Sim City or Farmville, where you build and grow things, collect taxes, generate population. But unlike Sim City, this one has dragons.

And I want to see the dragon fly. But it probably won't happen in my lifetime. And that's because it takes soooooo long to "level up" - which means get strong enough to go hunting for the dragon armor that is necessary before the dragon can fly. For example, it can take up to 2 days to build (level up) one of the buildings. And you can't do much while you wait. Other than chat online with other players.

And that's when I became an overlord.

VALENTINE'S DAY CHALLENGES!

We have 6 entries in our Valentine's Day Challenge. Please come in to vote on your favorite. Quilts will only be up for a little while longer, so make sure you come in to see the quilts!



DOWNTON ABBEY RETREAT! MARCH 21-23 NAGEL WARREN MANSION

We are set for Friday March 21 through Sunday March 23. You will be able to check in mid afternoon on Friday and we will plan to leave Sunday mid afternoon. We have 8 king bed rooms reserved. Cost is based upon double occupancy. If you prefer a single room, you will need to let me know very quickly so I can look into booking a different room. Reservations will be made through me and you can secure your spot with a down payment of half the cost. The rest will be due by March 15.

If you need to cancel, I will need to know 30 days in advance. But if something comes up, please talk to me because we might be able to work something out.

We will be sewing in the conference rooms in the basement. There are 3 rooms that can accommodate about 16 sewers. We will be cozy, but I think it will work. I will set up separate tables for cutting and will plan on having 2 irons/boards. If you just want to come to

sew, and go home at night to your own bed, I might be able to accommodate that. However, I don't want to get more than 16 sewers. If you are interested in this option, let me know and I'll see what I can work out.

At the retreat, you may sew on any project that you like -- it does not have to be a Downton Abbey Quilt. For those of you sewing your Downton Abbey quilts, though, I will provide instruction for the horizontal quilt (quilt blocks are the ones already on line) plus you will get a set of patterns for the second quilt (the on point quilt with the green alternate blocks).

During the retreat, we will play some games, win some door prizes, watch some episodes of Downton Abbey, take High Tea on Saturday, and sew our socks off!

Included in the cost:

2 nights (2 per room) at the Nagel Warren Mansion (such a treat!)
Sat & Sun breakfast
High tea on Saturday
Set of patterns for second quilt
Door prizes
Lots of Fun !!!

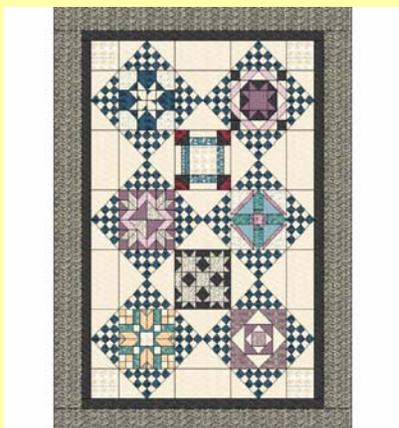
Lunch and dinners are on our own. There are plenty of fun restaurants downtown. You can also check out what is playing at the Lincoln Center and go to a movie.

Cost per person = \$175. A \$90 deposit will secure your room.

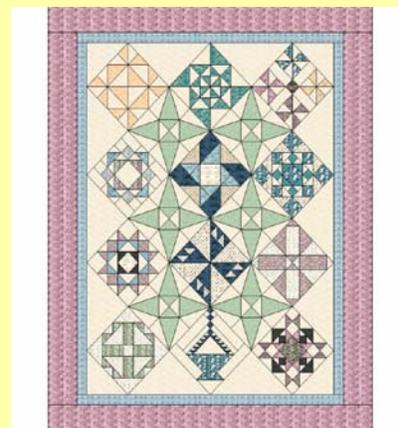
Blocks for the first quilt are posted on line at www.aroundtheblockquilts.com Three blocks are currently posted. I will get 3 more out as soon as I can.

You can find the blocks under the "What's New" tab. Fabric requirements for the quilt are also given. These blocks will stay posted for a limited time and we'll have them in the store. Price to buy in store is \$1 for one page or \$2 for 2 pages -- to help me cover the costs of the ink.

First Quilt/horizontal



Second quilt/on point





NATIONAL QUILT DAY

March 15

We have all sorts of fun things planned. It's Toad Toter Day (full moon), so everyone who brings in their Toad Toter bag will get 20% off anything that can be stuffed into the bag.

We are also having a "Finish your Quilt" sale for everyone. Bring in your finished top and get 20% your backing, binding and/or batting. But you have to bring in your finished top!

We are also providing free "classes" or "demos" on various quilt topics.

10-noon Learn how to use the Electric Quilt software program. I will demonstrate how the program works and you will have time to "play" on the program and maybe design your own block or quilt!

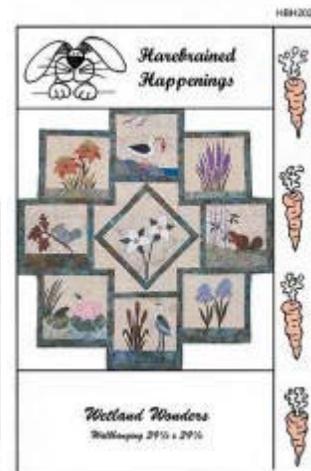
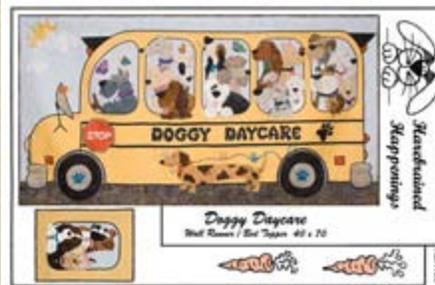
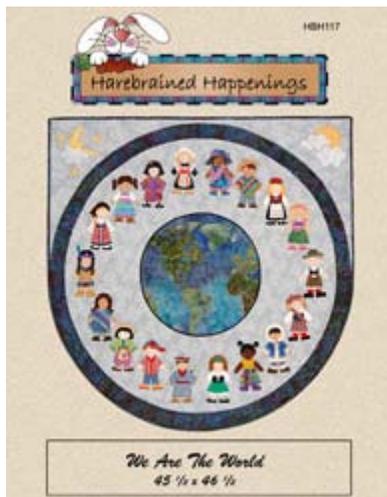
1-2 Jean Korber will demonstrate how to put on machine applied, corded binding. Very cool.

2-3 Jo Sunderman will show us what the craze Zentangles (doodling gone crazy) is all about.

3-4 Cool Tool demos, including cutting tips using Creative Grid rulers, best batting choices, how to use Transfer EZ, making bias tape stems for applique

4-5 Make & Take Tea Towels

WHAT'S NEW!!





More music:



From Moda:



February Classes & Special Events

Friday Nighters Fri. Feb. 28, 5:30-9 \$10 (one time fee for year)

This class will help you get organized for Christmas 2014 -- or just help you get things done. You give me a list of your "to dos" or unfinished projects you want to finish and then each month I check off what you've completed. Trust me. If you need incentive to stay on track, this is it. You can bring your sewing machine or do hand work.

March Classes & Special Events

Block of the Month Sat. Mar. 1, 10:30-11:15 FREE

Join at any time. You get a free fat quarter if you come to class with the previous month's completed block. This year we're making a Christmas Quilt -shaped like a tree. Each month will feature a different block, mostly 12" finished blocks.

Make it Do (Use it Up, Wear it Out, Make it Do or Do Without) Sat. Mar. 1, April 5 and May 3 ongoing

Monthly Minis First Saturday of the Month, Jan-Dec. 4-6 Barb Boyer \$20 (free if you buy the kits)

Each month we will feature a snowman, from McKenna Ryan's Snow Buds patterns. The kits will be laser cut, all ready for assembly. You can also choose to make the Snow Bud with your own fabrics. The laser kits will billed month by month.

Monday Morning Quilts Mar. 3, April 7 10-2 Free, if you buy that month's kit

Each month we will feature quilts from the Fons & Porter Love of Quilting magazine or other fun quilts. From Fons & Porter, we will choose one of the quilts from the magazine and make limited kits. In class, we will show you how to put the quilt together and you will have time to get started. Quilts will be big or small or in between. The first quilt, just because it is January, will be Lost Socks, an easy fusible quilt. We won't completely kit this quilt, but we will have a bundle of flannel fats to get you started. **March will feature our first Fons & Porter quilt.**

Beginning Quilting Sun. Mar. 9, 16 OR Wednesdays: 1-4 OR 6-8:30 Mar. 5 on going

Hand Embroidery Club Sat. Mar. 8, 10-11:30 FREE Kathy Sconce

(Club normally meets the 2nd Sat. of each month from 10-noon)

This year we're stitching "penny squares" using simple drawings that we create! During class we will draw various designs and stitch then on 5" squares. Each month we will learn new stitches and trade designs and ideas. Then these 5" squares can be made into a sampler quilts, or stitched into a "book" of stitches. You will also make your own notebooks so you can keep your squares, ideas, floss, needles & scissors in one place. You can join anytime.

Sophia Sat. Mar. 8, 1-5 \$25 Jo Sunderman

Treat yourself to a wonderful spring quilt! If you are unfamiliar with Jo's patterns, now is the time to take a class from the designer herself!--learn her tips and tricks as she guides you through her easy process of tracing, fusing and securing the flowers onto stunning backgrounds. (Pssst: You can have your quilt done in time for Mother's Day!)

Let's Knit Socks! Mon. Mar. 10, 1:30-3:30 OR 6-8:30
Carol Moler

Learn the basics of top down knitted socks with heels and toes.

Beginning Machine Quilting Wed. Mar. 12, 6:30-9 \$25
Sue Frerich

Be prepared to quilt! You will practice your quilting skills on various samples, using both your walking foot and darning foot. Batting, threads, needles and patterns will be discussed. Who knows? By the time you leave you may even be able to write/quilt your name!

Back Basting Applique Wed. Mar. 13, 1-3
Sandra Freeburg \$25

Back basting is a template free method of needle turn applique. No slippery freezer paper or chalked lines on top that never seem to get turned under quite right. This method is especially great for traveling, because your pieces will be basted onto your background -- no need for pins to get in the way. This class is great for beginners and all levels of appliquers. Don't let hand applique frustrate you. It's really easy and relaxing!

Knit Pickin' Club Thur. Mar. 13, 6-8:30

Every second Thursday, we're getting together to practice our knitting. The Club is open to all skill levels. We want to share what we've learned, find new patterns, and simply just sit and knit. You can start simply by making a dishcloth. Carol will teach you the essentials to get you started. For those of you who already know how to knit, you can still join the club--it's time for you to simply sit & knit & share ideas.

NATIONAL QUILT DAY

Lots of demos all day long! It's also a Toad Toter day (full moon observed) Stay tuned for more details.

Hand Quilting Mon. Mar. 19 1-3 \$25
Sandra Freeburg

Hand quilting is an art that should not be lost. By the end of Sandra's class you will be hand quilting with confidence. Everyone has at least one special quilt that calls out for hand quilting. And there is nothing better than the feel of a hand quilted quilt. Do yourself a favor and learn this art that connects us to our past -- our mothers, grandmothers and great grandmothers.

Hand Applique Club
Thursday Mar. 20 6-8:30 free

Every 3rd Thursday, we're getting together to practice our hand applique skills. The Club is open to all skill levels. We want to share what we've learned, find new patterns, and simply just sit and sew. More and more patterns are showing applique work, and while sometimes you can just fuse it down, learning how to hand applique is a wonderful skill that can be carried anywhere you go.



February 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 BOM 10:30-11:30 Make it Do 1-2 Monthly Minis 4-6
2 Closed	3 Monday Morning Quilts 10-2	4	5 Beginning Quilt 1-4 or Beginning Quilt 6-8:30	6 Beyond Basics: Paper Piecing 1-3 Back Basting 6-8:30	7 Open Sew1-4	8 Embroidery Club 10-noon Cabin in the Woods Rag Quilt 1-5
9 Beginning Quilt 1-4	10 Learn to Twist- Knit a Cowl 1:30-3:30 OR 6- 8:30	11	12 Beginning Quilt 1-4 or Beginning Quilt 6-8:30	13 Beyond Basics: Bias Half Square Triangles 1-3 Knit Pickers' Club 6-8:30	14 Valentine's Day FullMoon	15 Ruffle Quilt 10:30-5
16 Beginning Quilt 1-4	17 Jelly Roll Race 10:30-5 Presidents' Day	18	19 Beginning Quilt 1-4 or Beginning Quilt 6-8:30	20 Beyond Basics: Inset Seams 1- 3 Hand Applique Club 6- 8:30	21 Open Sew1-4	22 Design Challenge 10:30- 5
23 Beginning Quilt 1-4	24	25	26 Beginning Quilt 1-4 or Beginning Quilt 6-8:30	27 Beyond Basics: Flying Geese 1-3	28 Friday Nights 5:30 -?	

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9 Beginning Quilt 1-4	10 Learn to Knit Socks 1:30-3:30 OR 6-8:30	11	12 Beginning Machine Quilting 6:30-9	13 Back Basting 1-3 Knit Pickers' Club 6-8:30	14	15 National Quilt Day FullMoon (celebrated)
16 Beginning Quilt 1-4	17	18	19 Hand Quilting 1-3	20 Hand Applique Club 6-8:30	21 Downton Abbey Retreat	22 Downton Abbey Retreat
23 Downton Abbey Retreat	24	25	26 Beginning Machine Applique 1:30-4 or 6-8:30	27	28 Friday Nighters 5:30-?	29 Hare Brained Jungle Quilt 10:30-5
30 Pillow Case Party 1-4	31					