

Favorite quotes from the Dowager Countess of Downton Abbey:

"There can be too much truth in any relationship."



March 21, 2014

Those of you who live with animals will understand.

Dog owners take pride in bragging about their dog's vocabulary. What they mean is the number of words a dog understands, which is different from the number of sounds a dog makes when she talks. My dogs understand a great many words. But they don't speak as many. Not like cats. But we'll get there in a minute.

I had a border collie once that I could order, "get upstairs right now if you know what's good for you and stay there." Rainey would obediently trot upstairs and stay there. What most people didn't realize was that he understood the words "get" "upstairs" and "stay." All the other words were just window dressing. But it was fun to show off.

I had another border who understood the difference between the words "down" and "off." The word "off" generally meant "get off of what you are on and go somewhere else." It could also mean "don't jump on me." It could also mean "go away." It was a useful word. And Chevas knew he was supposed to stop doing whatever it was he was doing and go do something else. Easy.

The word "down" on the other hand meant only one thing: Lie down. Immediately. It's a herding command. When you need control of a flock of sheep, for example, sometimes the dog not only has to stop but also has to physically lie down. Immediately. Thus the word "down." Not "lie down." Or "lay down." "Down" is a faster command. Plus, it doesn't involve grammar.

My dad taught me that only chickens can lay eggs, not dogs. So my dogs have always known proper grammar concerning the difference between "lie" and "lay." I would tell my friends, when they told my dogs to "go lay down" but with no success, that my dogs couldn't do that. Only chickens could lay. Then I would tell my dogs to go "lie DOWN" emphasizing the "down" command. And of course, my dogs would obey. It was grammatically correct, after all. It had absolutely nothing to do with the fact that I was giving the command....

But I've left the point of the story. Chevas, my sheep herding border collie, got the difference between "off" and "down." My mother never did. Chevas would be in kitchen with mom, herding her around because he was bored. Mom would get exasperated and she'd tell Chevas to go "lie down." And he would. He'd drop right at her feet. Immediately. Causing her to trip over him, causing her to yell at me. And I'd remind her that he did exactly what she told him to do, which didn't go over very well. So I'd tell him to "get upstairs and stay there until I tell you you can come down." And off he'd go.

I could never get mom to remember that the correct word to get rid of the dog was to say "off." Or "git," which is another all purpose word that means "to go from where you are to someplace different and farther away."

BTW, Chevas also had a "get on your feet" command which was really pretty funny to use at dog trials. Border collies are usually better herders of sheep than of cows. A border can creep along on his belly and the sheep, always fearful of predators, will move away. The same tactic doesn't work on cattle. They could care less. So Chevas would often get stuck in a "down" and when that happened the cows would ignore him and start looking for something to eat. In a competitive trialing arena that gets embarrassing.

So I taught him to stand up when I hollared, "Get on your feet." Chevas would stand up, the cattle would move and the audience would laugh. It was great entertainment.

But that's dogs. Not cats.

I'm not convinced that cats understand a lot of words. Perhaps it's because they don't want to. But they do converse a little better. At least Lydia does.

For example, you can't mistake the petulant meow she makes when she's been outside all day and it's either been 1) raining, 2) snowing, 3) too cold, or 4) too hot. I'll ask her how her day was and I get this snippy little meow that clearly says, "What do you think. It's about time you got home."

If she's had a good day outside, and I ask her if she wants to come inside, her meow is a little politer, but it still conveys the message, "Why else would I be standing at the door expectantly."

On the other hand, if she's been inside all day and now wants to go outside, her meows are very much more demanding, and loud. She assumes I'm deaf and can't hear her. She's right, kind of. I just don't always pay attention until it gets really annoying.

She also has a pitiful meow when she wants to be picked up and placed on top of the dryer, where her food is. That meow conveys, "Woe is me, I don't think I can jump that high and I am so hungry. Take pity on me and pick me up." Occasionally there is a "please" that goes along with this meow.

In the morning I'll ask her if she wants to go outside, and as she's walking to the door with me she meows a polite and dignified, "yes." The dogs, on the other hand, if I ask them if they want to go outside, practically fall all over themselves in happiness - but they don't say anything and there is nothing dignified about them.

DOWNTON ABBEY FABRICS

The rest of the reorders are in -- Lady Mary bolts and Dowager bolts! I am taking the fabric to the retreat at the Nagel Warren Mansion. Those of you who requested certain cuts, I have called to reconfirm your orders and I have cut what you have requested. Those fabrics are at the store in the desk drawer, labeled with your names.

If you did not get a call from me, but were expecting a call, please contact me. Even though the fabric is at the retreat, you can reach me there -- or call the shop and they can reach me -- and I can cut yardage at the retreat.

WHAT'S NEW!!

From RJR: Man of the House & Woodland Trails by Dan Morris



From RJR--Robyn Pandolph



From Robert Kaufmann:



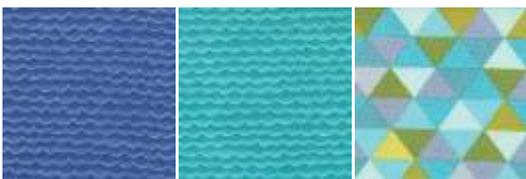
From Henry Glass:



From Alexander Henry:



From Moda:



March Classes & Special Events

DOWNTON ABBEY RETREAT! WARREN NAGEL MANSION MARCH 21-23

Beginning Machine Applique Wed. Mar. 26, 1-4 or 6-8:30 \$25 **Barb Boyer**

So many quilts use applique these days. Learn the ins and outs of machine applique, from points to curves. We will practice the button hole/blanket stitch, satin stitch, and you can also play around with your decorative stitches. Threads, fusibles and stabilizers will be discussed.

Hand Quilting Thur. Mar. 27 6-8:30 \$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.

Hare Brained Jungle Walk Applique Quilt Sat. Mar. 29, 10-5 \$30 **Sue Frerich**

Giraffes in high heels? Zebras in snow shoes? Snake on a skateboard? Each jungle animal is decked out in sneakers, roller skates, spats and crocs - for the crocodile, of course. This cute quilt is fused and then you can have fun decorating the shoes with laces and fur.

Pillow Case Party Sun. Mar. 30 1-4 FREE

If you've never made a pillow case, or just want some time to sew a pillow case, this class is for you. This is a great mother/daughter styled class and pillow cases make great presents!

Friday Nighters Fri. Mar. 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 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	7 Open Sew 1-4	8 Embroidery Club 10-noon Sophia 1-5
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 Hand Quilting	28 Friday Nighters 5:30 -?	29 Hare Brained Jungle Quilt 10:30-5
30 Pillow Case Party 1-4	31					

Join the fun and come feel the difference of quality fabrics.

Happy quilting!

Sincerely,

Barbara Boyer

Around the Block

307-433-9555

www.aroundtheblockquilts.com