

Favorite quotes from the Dowager Countess of Downton Abbey:

DOWAGER COUNTESS OF GRANTHAM

[to Mrs. Crawly] You are quite wonderful, the way you see room for improvement wherever you look. I never knew such reforming zeal.

ISOBEL CRAWLEY I take that as a compliment. [turns and walks in the other direction]

DOWAGER COUNTESS OF GRANTHAM [laughs] I must have said it wrong.



March 8, 2014

My days as an overlord are numbered. And that's mainly because the dragon game I am playing keeps crashing. It is free, after all. I can't expect too much. And because it keeps crashing, I can't get anything done - meaning "level up."

But how did I get into this predicament in the first place, you ask? I know you're curious. If you remember, I wanted to see my dragon fly - but in order for that to happen I have to have dragon armor. And in order for that to happen I have to be strong enough to beat the really bad guys who are hiding the armor. And in order for that to happen I have to get all my buildings, troops and resources at maximum levels. And that takes a lot of time, even if the program doesn't crash.

So what do you do while you wait for 2 days to train troops or build a fortress? I know the sensible people reading this are saying: 1) sew; 2) do the dishes; 3) watch Downton Abbey; 4) give up & not play the game. Nah-that's not what game players do. They chat.

I lurked for a while, not sure if I wanted to engage anyone. Then one night everyone was telling their age-a popular chat topic, BTW. I was tempted, but didn't join. I figured I would shut down the chat if I was truthful about my age. So instead I wrote that my cat was outside. Just to see if anyone responded. Nothing. Then I wrote, "I have a white cat. She's outside. It's snowing." I thought it was funny. Nobody else did, apparently. But eventually someone posted that she liked cats, and that elicited a few warm & fuzzy cat comments.

So, being marginally successful, I continued to post obscure references to things. Like quotes from Shakespeare. But nobody got it, or at least no one responded. But then nobody chats about anything important. Most of the texts involve age and sex: "How old is everybody?" "I'm 19" "Hey 19" "You got a boyfriend" "I'm a boy you moron." "LOL." I've censored the actual texts for your benefit. Profanity is not supposed to be allowed, but that doesn't stop everyone. [Parental warning: The game is rated for all ages. That means 12 year olds can read the profanity and other inappropriate messages on the chats. Just so you know.]

You've got to understand that the age group on this game is between 12 and maybe 30. Their idea of chatting is to see how many cuss words they can sneak by the sensor. For example, if you write the word passive, it would come out as p***ive. So it becomes a creative venture to write cuss words using other characters or using

misspellings to get your meaning across. which is wonderful fun for teenagers.

And of course much of the profanity comes from guys enticing gals, and venturing into the delicate world of seducing while chatting. Now this is what's called a global chat, so you're not just talking dirty to one person. Everyone can read it. It's amazing to me how popular this is.

Mostly everyone ignores me. I did write once that the insults on the chat were really entertaining. I got a response from someone who agreed with me, but I don't think she understood that I was being sarcastic. I don't think she would have even understood the concept. I tried talking about the Olympics, but no one was watching. They were watching the Walking Dead, of course.

One girl proudly told everyone her full name, her age (19) and what city she lived in. I wrote back that that was too much info. But she kept at it. So I looked her up on line. Yup, she did live in DC. So I wrote her back & told her I found her on line. She hasn't posted a text since.

And then I made a different connection. With a young kid who was doing a little swearing and bragging that he was a genius and that everyone else on line was a moron. So I wrote him back and said, I was, too, and it wasn't anything to shout about. He got angry and swore back at me, so I wrote back and told him to "use his words." I remember my brother told me once that journalists don't need to cuss. We have words and can be much more creative when we want to insult someone.

Well, eventually I asked him what he was studying and that led to chatting in a private room. He seemed like a really nice kid. Graduated high school early, going to college. So he joined my alliance so that we could share more words back and forth. Up to this point, I was an alliance of one, me. And now he made 2. Until about 2 days later. And that's when it happened. I became an overlord. I now have about 125 kids -- vassals. I have no idea who they are. And they are clearly stronger than their overlord, me. They keep asking for troops and resources for levels that I haven't reached yet. I have even promoted a couple of them to "lord" status - up from vassal. I don't know what else to do.

But now I am about ready to quit. I lost a bunch of my troops trying to get the dragon armor and it will take weeks to retrain them. And then weeks more to train more of them to even attempt another assault. In the meantime I keep getting raided by players who have 40 times (I'm not kidding) the number of troops that I have. I just can't get ahead.

So I think it's time to find a different game. Or go back to embroidery. I may leave one last chat & tell them all I that it's been fun but I have to get back to my knitting. I wonder what response I'll get.

VALENTINE'S DAY CHALLENGES!

We have a winner! Come in to see who won.

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.

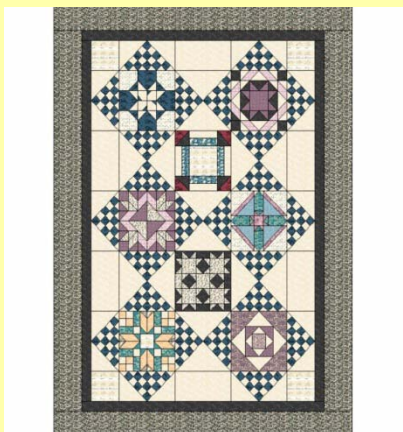
Cost per person = \$175. A \$90 deposit will secure your room.

Blocks for the first quilt are posted on line at www.aroundtheblockquilts.com Nine 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

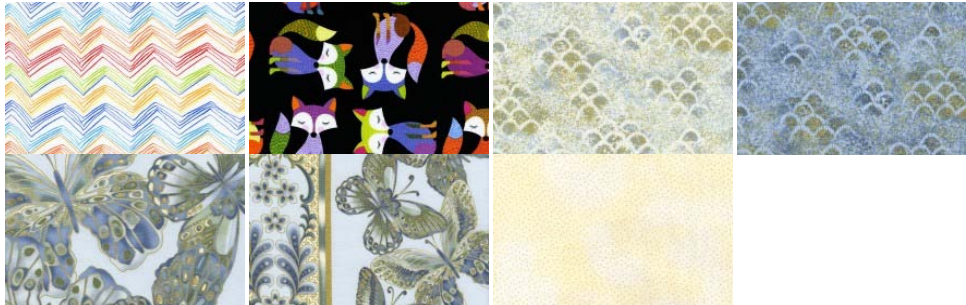
4-5 Make & Take Tea Towels

WHAT'S NEW!!

Paw Prints (cats & dogs) from Westminster



From Timeless Treasures



March Classes & Special Events

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 them 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 quilt, 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.



**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 Mon. 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 Sew1-4	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	28 Friday Nighters 5:30-?	29 Hare Brained Jungle Quilt 10:30-5
30 Pillow Case Party 1-4	31					