



December 6, 2024

“What are you wearing?” I asked Becca. She had just trotted in from outside wearing a garish red and green sweater that blinked on and off at irregular intervals. Becca, for those of you unfamiliar with her, is my red mini-Australian Shepherd, which means if she dons a Christmas sweater, it usually clashes with her fur. So just go with this. It’s easier than trying to figure it out.

“I bought this off Amazon to celebrate the season,” she said. “And it also honors Canada, which is where we’re moving, right?” Becca’s a little impertinent at times. Sorry about that.

“Why Canada?” I asked in trepidation. As a lawyer, I know better than to ask a question without knowing the answer first. This is especially true when talking to Becca.

“Vancouver hosted the first ugly sweater party in 2002,” she said. “Apparently, the inspiration for the party theme was the 2001 movie, Bridget Jones’ Diary, where Colin Firth shows up in a sweater with a huge Rudolph red nosed reindeer on the front. The next year, two friends, Chris Boyd and John Birch, hosted the first ugly Christmas sweater party. ‘Cause that sweater was really ugly.”

“Oh,” I said, not expecting a straight forward response.

“So where is your Christmas tree?” she asked, looking around the living room. “I’ve already decorated my dog house, just like Snoopy,” she said. “We are going to watch a Charlie Brown Christmas, tonight, right?”

“Ah, maybe Christmas Vacation,” I said, still thrown off by her matter of fact conversation. “I’ll drag the tree out tonight and plug it in,” I said. “What’s with all the Christmasy enthusiasm?” I asked. Another question to which I did not know the answer.

“December is all about traditions,” she said. “You know, like Yule logs, candles on the tree, Christmas pickles, creepy Christmas cards, milk & cookies for Santa. Shelf on the elf. One red lightbulb. Hanging stockings by the fire.” She looked around. “Where’s my stocking!” she demanded.

“Okay, okay, slow down a minute.” This is the squirrely Becca I know. And love. She packs a lot into her little brain, but it doesn’t always come out right. “We don’t do some of those traditions, any more. Wait, wait,” I admonished her, as she started to protest. “We’ll still put out milk & cookies for Santa.” She wagged her tail, or stump of tail.

“You’re right, Christmas is about traditions. We all create our own. When I grew up, I remember listening to Christmas records in the basement, while I swung on my swing.”

“You had a swing in the basement?” Becca asked. “That’s a little weird.”

“Well, the basement was a little weird. We had a big scary furnace, a ping pong table, and then a little room that one of my brothers used as a bedroom at one time. Mom had her sewing machine set up in the room. The Hammond chord organ was also there, which is how I learned to play by number. Middle C was 1, D was 2, and so

forth. You pressed a button for the chords. And the swing was in the middle of the room. I swung to the songs and evaluated how good I had been that year.

“We put up a tree mid December. When I was younger, it was real and we’d go downtown to the warehouse district where the tree sellers were to pick out a tree. I remember mom wanted a flocked tree one year. We never did that again. We’d also go downtown to look through the Brandeis Department store windows and ooh and ahh over all of the Christmas displays. On Saturdays, I’d take the bus downtown to do my Christmas shopping—I was in grade school then. Definitely different times. We’d get the Sears catalog and I’d spend hours looking through the toy section I looked through all of the Ideal magazines for Christmas crafts to make, like Reader’s Digest trees spray painted gold. Mom made cookies and...”

“Enough, already,” Becca said. “You said there were some traditions that we don’t do any more. Get back on track.” And she’s right, of course. She always is.

“Okay. Yule logs. They date back to the really old days when we celebrated the winter solstice. Yule logs were burned during winter solstice celebrations. It’s related to pagan rites intended to banish darkness and evil and bring good fortune.”

“Well that tradition worked,” Becca smirked. “If they lit the Yule log on the longest night of the year, then the next night would always be shorter.”

“You figured that out all on your own, huh?” Becca growled. “It’s a tradition that celebrates the end of winter and the beginning of spring,” I continued. “Lots of people today, if they cut their own trees, use the trimmed end of the tree to stick in their fireplace to celebrate the season.”

“Yeah, and everyone else just turns on the tv to the glowing fireplace station,” Becca said dryly.

“See, traditions change over time,” I told her. “Like, the Elf on the Shelf, not the other way around,” I told her. “It’s a bit of a creepy tradition where the stuffed elf sits somewhere in the house, watching the kids be naughty or nice. And then when everyone’s asleep, it flies back to the North Pole to rat them out to Santa.”

“Now you sound like me,” Becca said. “Dial down the sarcasm a little.”

“Okay. Well, we don’t have much space to talk about many more traditions this week. What else did you bring up? Oh, yeah, creepy Christmas Cards and pickle ornaments. Christmas Card sending began during the Victorian era, and it wasn’t unusual to find cards depicting dead frogs, dancing insects, jolly shellfish, and terrifying snowmen. Or turkeys roasting a person.”

“Charles Dickens lived during the Victorian period, didn’t he?” Becca asked.

“Yup.”

“So that explains his Christmas Carol story,” she said. “Didn’t your mom make mouse traps, with fake stuffed mice caught under the trap, clearly dead, with a swag of holly and a handwritten tag that said, ‘Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse,’” Becca asked.

“Yeah. I thought those were really funny. I still have one of them.”

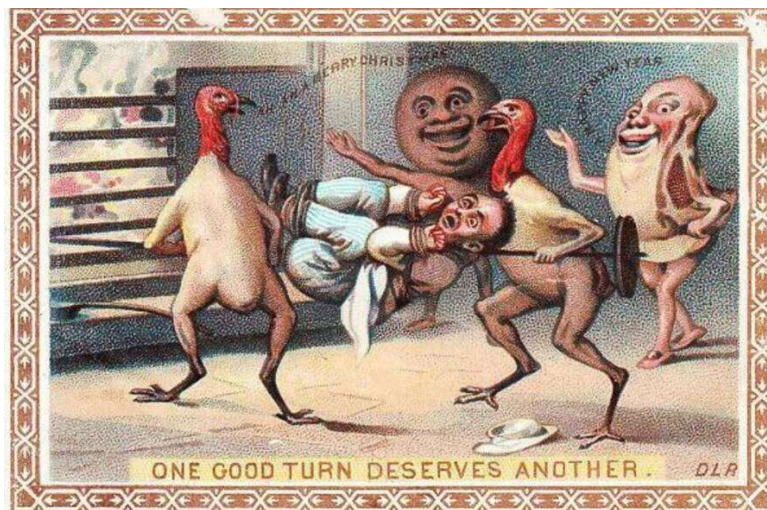
“So what about the Christmas pickle?” Becca asked.

“Well, it was probably just a marketing tool,” I told her. “Lots of traditions get started that way. Apparently, Woolworths got a shipment of German ornaments, and one was

a green pickle. So the sales pitch became, the first child to spot a green ornament on the tree got a prize. Don't know how true that is, but that's the way of traditions."

"So what are we watching tonight?" Becca asked. "It's a tradition to watch a different Christmas movie each night. Christmas Vacation, Charlie Brown, Santa Clause, Christmas Story, Home Alone, Christmas in Connecticut, Christmas Carol, White Christmas, Holiday Inn. I've got a list out in the dog house. I'll bring it in, she said over her shoulder as she trotted outside. We might actually watch Teahouse of the August Moon. Not Christmas. But don't tell Becca that.

Socks up, boss. (Watch the movie)



Christmas Mystery 2024

[Christmas Mystery 2024](#)

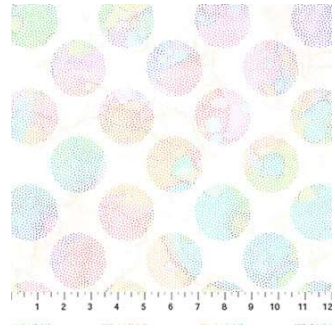
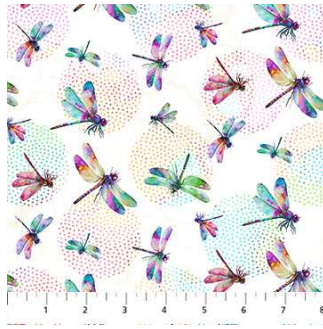


New Fabric

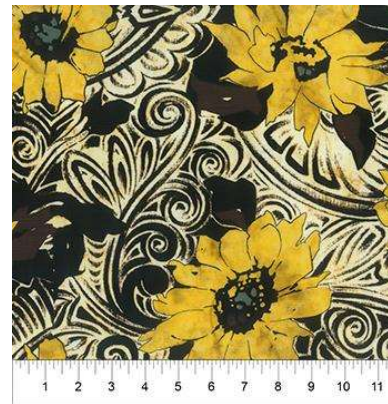
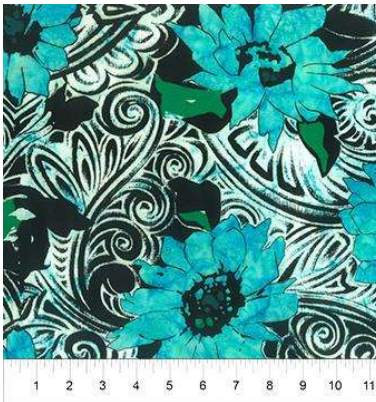
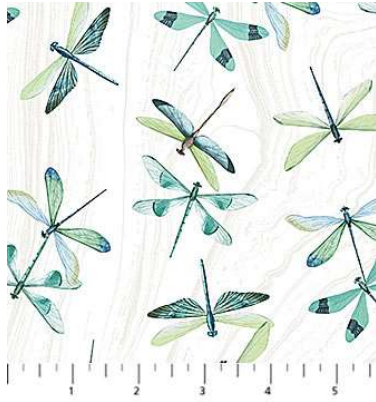
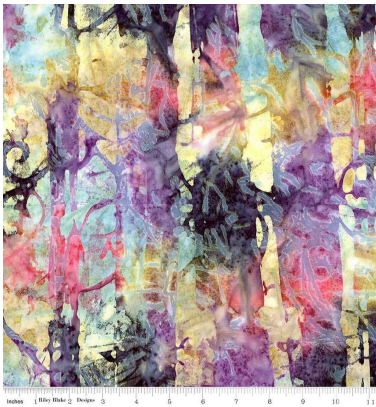


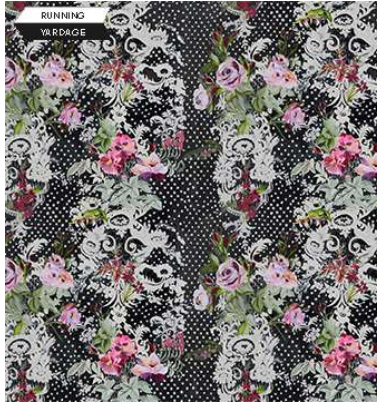
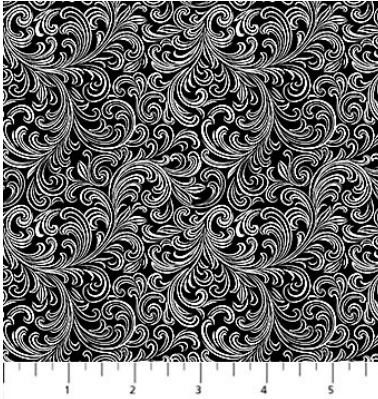
From Michael Miller





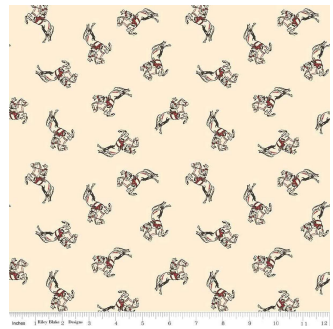
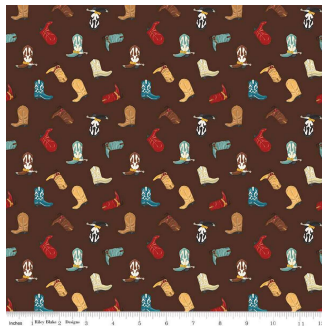
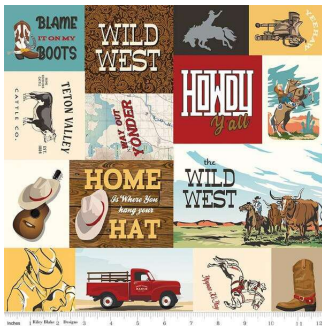
From Northcott





From Kennard & Kennard



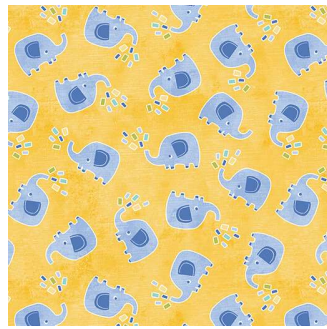


And one other fabric with the lyrics Home on the Range printed on the fabric. Couldn't grab a pictu

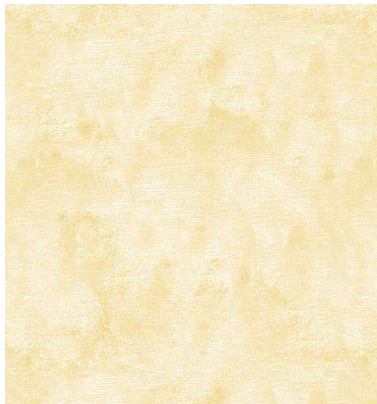
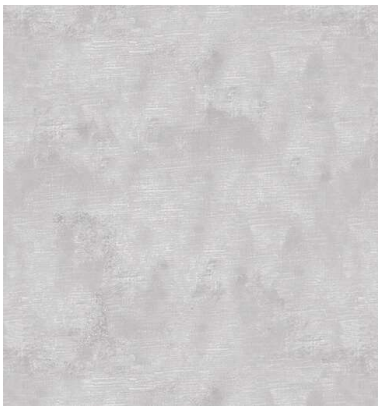
From Riley Blake

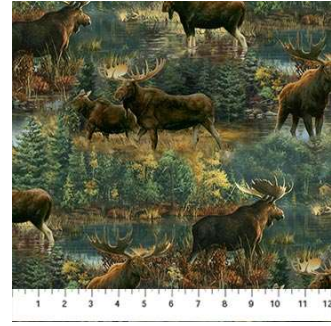
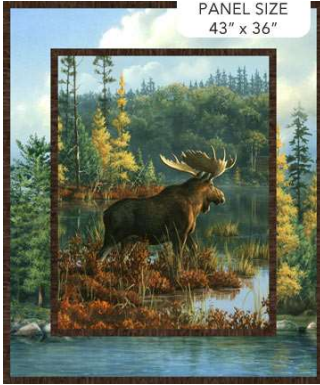


From Quilting Treasures

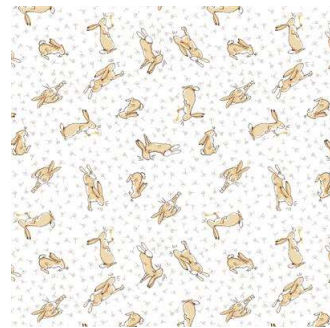
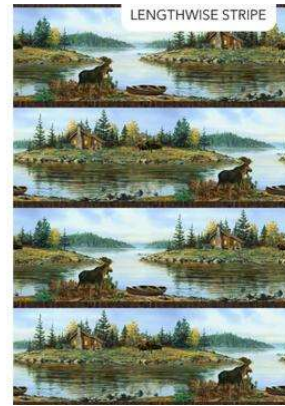
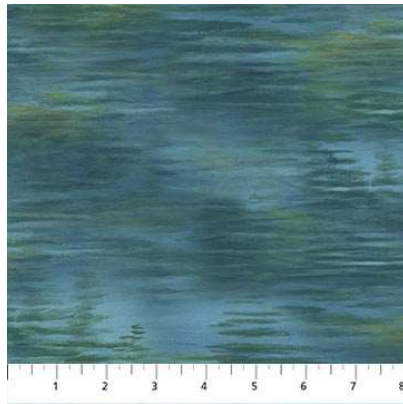


From Benartex. All but the yellow is flannel.

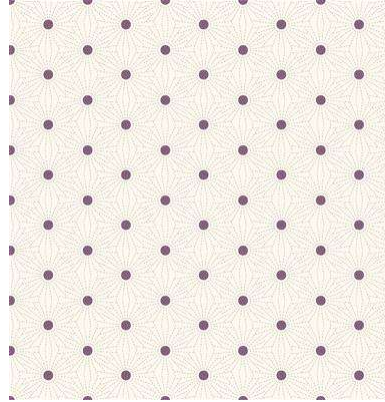
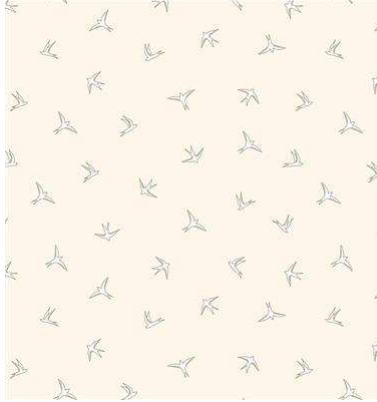
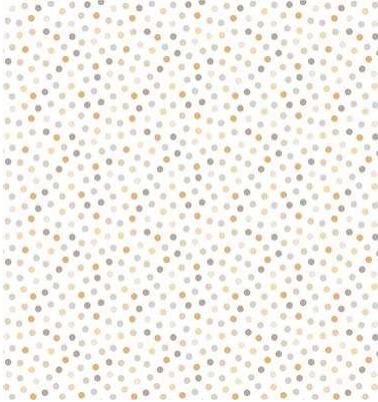




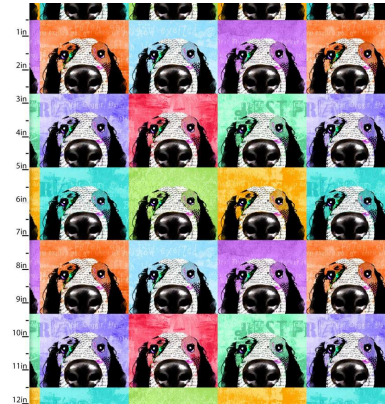
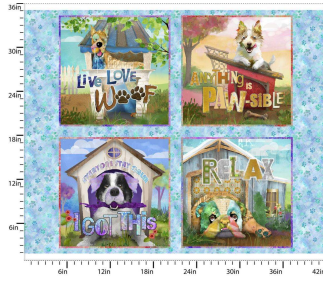
From Northcott



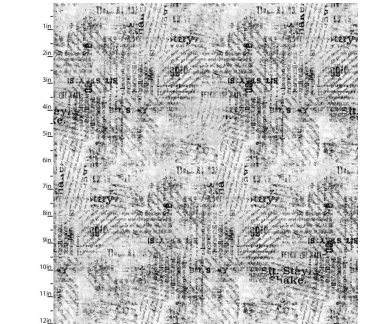
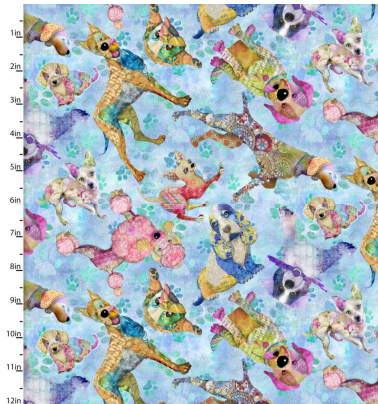
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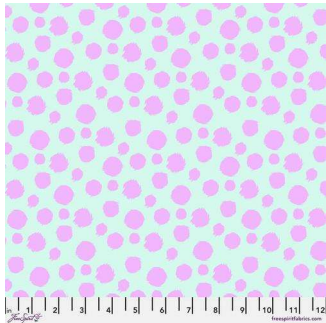
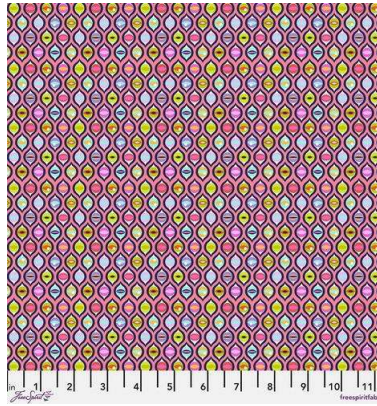
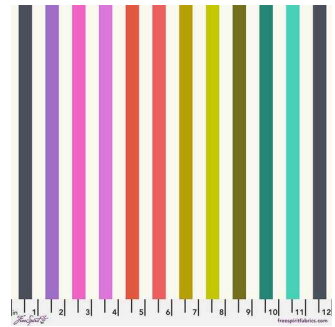
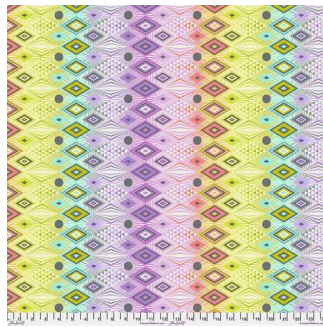


From Clothworks

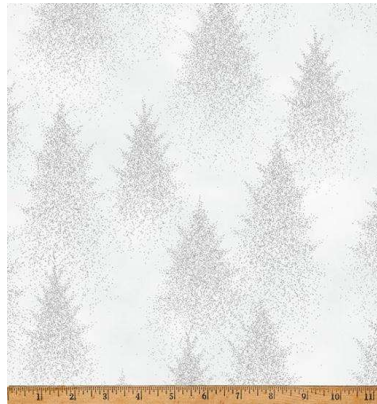


From 3 wishes





From Tula Pink

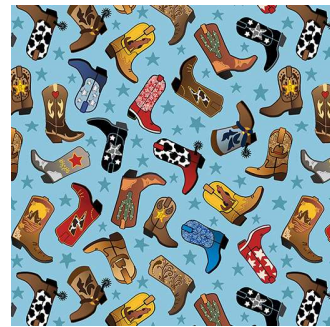


Yoy 7 remaining!"

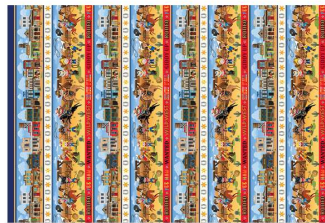


From Hoffman





AS SHOWN 42" X 24"

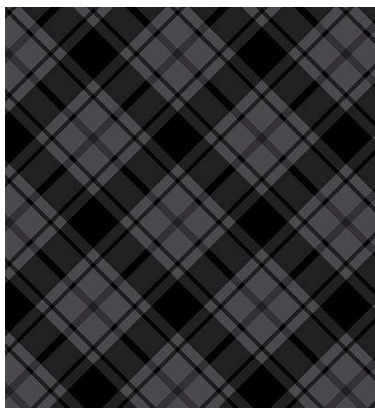
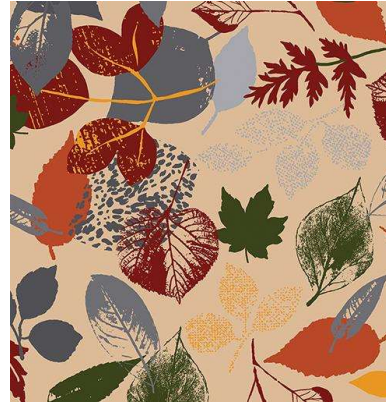
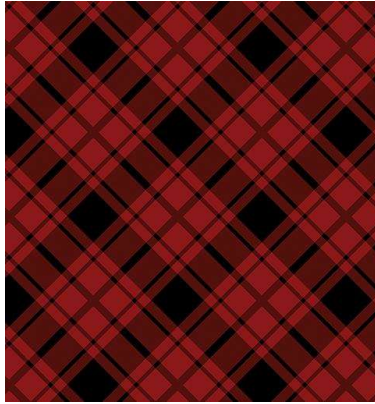
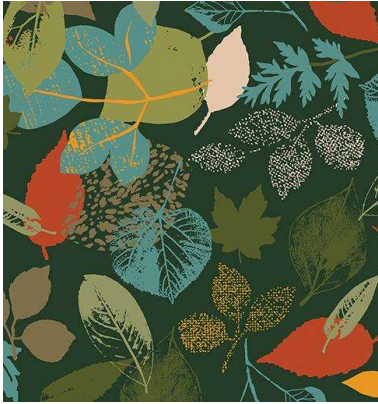


AS SHOWN 44" X 30"  
\*stripe runs parallel to selvage



PANEL MEASURES APPROX. 18" X 27"

From Benartex: The fall looking ones are flannel



**A Reminder:**

First Saturdays of the month, from September thru December, is the Finish Your Quilt Sale! Backing, Binding and Batting are 20% off any of the three, BUT you have to bring in your finished quilt top for show & tell to get the sale price. No exceptions. We want to see your quilts!



DECEMBER 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 CLOSED	2	3 Hand work Club 2-5	4	5	6	7 BOM 10:30 Finish your quilt sale: 20% off backings, bindings and battings  Machine Quilting with your BSR 1-4
8 CLOSED	9	10 Hand work Club 2-5	11 Knit Pickers' Club 2-5	12	13	14 Embroidery Club 10-noon  Storm at Sea Part I 1-4 <b>Full Moon</b>
15 CLOSED	16	17 Hand work Club 2-5	18	19	20	21 Storm at Sea Part II 10:30-4
22 CLOSED	23	24	25 Christmas	26	27 <b>Toad Toter Sale</b>	28 <b>Year End Sale</b>
29 CLOSED	30 CLOSED	31 CLOSED				Color of the month: red

## Ongoing Classes & Clubs

**Block of the Month** First Sat of month 10:30-11:15 FREE Barb Boyer

Join at any time. You get a free fat quarter if you come to class with the previous month's completed block. This year the challenge will be ... come in January and find out!

**Hand Embroidery Club** 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat. of the month, 10-noon FREE Kathy Sconce

If you want to learn to hand embroider or just brush up your technique, join us on the second Saturday of the month from 10 to noon. You can work on your own projects or you can join the project we are doing, which are sheep! From Crabapple Hill

**Knit Pickers' Club** 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wed of each month, 2-5 Carol Moler

Come join our Knit Pickers= Club. We knit 2 days a month every second and fourth Wednesday, from 2-5. The Club is open to all skill levels and, despite the name, includes crocheters as well. We want to share what we've learned, find new patterns, and simply just sit and knit. We may work on some felting projects, fingerless mittens, mittens, and socks. We can even help you get started—teach you the basics.

**Hand Sewing Club** every Tuesday afternoon 2-5

This club is open to everyone. Bring your hand sewing (embroidery, binding, knitting, crochet, etc) and sit & stitch.

**Toad Toters Club**

On full moon days (as noted in the calendar) you will get 20% off all purchases (not otherwise discounted) that you can fit in your bag. You must bring your bag to participate.

Full Moon Days: September 17, October 17, November 15 and December 14.

Discount Policy

We will honor only one discount -- whichever is largest. You can't combine a 10% with a 25% discount to get a 35% discount. On this we can't be bribed.

**Color of the Month and Book of the Month**

**September orange; October Book of the Month; November purple; December red**

**December Classes**

**Machine Binding with your BSR Sat December 7, 1-4 \$45 Jean Korber**

Do you have a Bernina and you have the BSR (stitch regulator) and don't know how to use it? This class is for you. Jean will show you the ins and outs of machine quilting on your Bernina with the BSR. This is hands on class. You will need a small project (10" to 40", table runner, small wall napping, place mat, etc) that is ready to be quilted. When you sign up, we will tell you how to prepare your project so you are ready to quilt in class.

**Storm at Sea Sat December 14 1-4 and 21 10:30-4 \$35 Barb Boyer**

This quilt used to be intimidating—then a ruler was developed and now it's a breeze! We will work with Deb Tucker's ruler for the construction of the block. We will also talk about various color schemes, one of which includes coloring the blocks to make a heart appear within the design.



Normal Shop Hours:

**Monday-Saturday 10-5:30**

**Sunday 1-5**

**Closed first Sunday of month (and some holidays)**

**New Hours for Winter Time (starting Nov 5-May 22)**

**Monday-Saturday 10-5, closed Sundays unless a class is scheduled. Then we're open 1-5. Check the schedule.**

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](http://www.aroundtheblockquilts.com)

