

Daily Blog

Category: Articles

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TQS Member Spotlight - Carol Moellers

We asked TQS Member, Carol Moellers, a few questions. Here's what she had to say:

First, can you tell us a bit about yourself and your non-quilting hobbies -

We have two veterinary clinics. One is in Greene and the other is in Charles City, Iowa. Greene was our first clinic and then about 7 years ago we had the opportunity to purchase the practice from a retiring veterinarian in Charles City. We quickly grew and we built a new clinic in 2004. Floating between the two places really keeps us busy but I always find time to work on quilts. I may only get a couple done in a year but it is something I just enjoy doing. I guess you could say I make time to quilt. I find a little hole in the evenings, on weekends, during holidays, and very early in the mornings some times when I can't sleep.



We have two classic cars. The 1962 T-Bird I restored with my Dad when I was in high school. It was a great bargain. It only cost me \$100 bucks. I learned so much from my Dad. I have never been one to watch much TV and I like to be doing something instead. I would go out in the shop and work on this car with my Dad. Dad knew how hard I worked on this one that he really did not have the heart to sell it, so he gave it to me. We would travel together to car shows all over Iowa and Illinois. I have a whole basement back home full of trophies. As you can tell I am a Daddy's girl.

The second car is a 1966 2+2 Fastback. It was my college wheels. At the time I thought \$600 was a lot to spend on a car back in 1978 with all the expenses of college ahead of me. When I got my first good paying job I bought a new 1982 Mustang. My Dad told me to keep the car, so I did. It was stored in a chicken coop for over 20 years. In 2006 we got it out and did a complete restoration on it. It is just like it was when it rolled off the showroom floor. I call it my "quilt hauling machine". The back seat folds down and it has a lot of room for quilts.



I am the only one in my family that went to college (ISU) and it was a big step. I wanted to be a Computer Programmer. After 4 years I ended up with a degree in Management Information Systems. I also met my husband, John in college and the rest is history.

Our two boys, John & Joe are Eagle Scouts. In 2003 we took about 20 boy scouts out for a hiking trip on the Appalachian Trail. A lot of these boys had never set foot out of Iowa. It was a wonderful trip. The picture in the video was taken on "Devils Raceway". It was amazing hiking. We hiked about 10 miles a day for 5 days. "Devils Raceway" was the most difficult part of the course. I don't think I have ever seen boulders so big. We had lots of scrapes and bruises on that day. All the boys were glad to set camp and get a good nights sleep. Our legs felt like lead weights the next morning. The boys love this stuff. Mom is a good sport and I don't mind doing stuff like this every once in awhile.

Also in the video is a photo of me and my sister Nancy. I always looked up to her as I was going up. She was with me at Houston and we had a great time together. A few people in a blog I posted asked if we were twins. No, we are 18 months apart from each other. I think I was about 3 or 4 when the picture was taken. We look more like each other now than we did when we were little.

What is your background in sewing/design?

I don't really have a background in design but I have always enjoyed sewing. I was in 4-H and liked to make some of my own clothes. When I was in high school, I helped my Dad work on classic cars. My Dad bought me an industrial upholstery sewing machine and I started a little business doing custom upholstery for classic cars. I have done interiors for all kinds of cars - Thunderbirds, Chevy's, Mustangs, Bentley's, Avanti, etc. My upholstery machine is still at home in my Mom and Dad's basement. My Dad uses it every once in a while to repair a tractor seat.

When did you start quilting?

I did not start quilting until 1982. I was in Des Moines living by myself and needed something to do in the evenings. I went to my first quilting class at Misses Wiggs Cabbage Patch and have been hooked ever since.

What quilters/sewers/designers inspired you and why?

I am so inspired by Ricky Tims and Sharon Schamber. I enjoy their artistic/creative abilities. They are not afraid to experiment. I enjoy watching the creativity these two talented and gifted individuals have.

Do you have a quilt studio?

After my oldest son left home to go to college I turned his bedroom into a sewing room. I never have enough space but I make do. It is my little oasis. I love going in there at nights and on weekends, even if it is only for 30 minutes or so. It is my place to relax and unwind from the day, time. I call it my therapy session. I need to get one of those signs that says "Do Not Disturb - Therapy in Session". My husband would get a kick out of it.

Which machine/machines do you use?

I use a Pfaff Expression 4.0 and a Pfaff 7560.

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Tell us about winning at the State Fair.

I entered 5 quilts in the Iowa State Fair in 2009. It was the very first time I had entered a quilt of any kind, in a show. I could not believe when I got that phone call informing me I had won something and I should come to Des Moines for Preview night. I called Tim, my quilter friend and we jumped in the car a few hours later and headed off to Des Moines. When we met with Jill Mead from *American Patchwork & Quilting* we were informed that we had just won the Sweepstakes Award. We did not have a clue of what that was, because we had never entered anything into a show before. Jill and the rest of the staff were just enlightened by our story. The quilts, which were entered in the show, were - Grandstand Fireworks, Summertime Fun, The Beat Goes On - The Music will Never Die, New Beginnings, and Christmastime Log Cabin. Each was entered in a different category and all 5 of them won ribbons. I later found out from the Director of the show that no first timer has ever done this. Everyone was so amazed and that is how the article "Quilting Changes Everything" came to be. I guess this was the turning point and I have been hooked ever since. It is so much fun to enter a contest and just see what happens.



Can you share some of the design process behind the inspiration and making of Stanza Della Signatura.

This quilt started out as our 25th Anniversary quilt. I went out on the Internet and typed in the words - Truth, Good, Beauty, and Human Spirit and it can up with this artist Raffaello Sanzio. I started reading and was drawn to this library in the Vatican - 'Stanza Della Signatura'. I felt it symbolized my wonderful life over the last 25 years with my husband John.

I began drawing sketches of designs that could be made into a quilt. I wanted to use a Mariner's Compass in the center to signify our finding each other. Then the rest just came. I incorporated flying geese, all going in the same direction. Geese mate for life and it was so fitting to use them in this quilt. John and I have always been very supportive of each other in what ever we do. This is why there are two rows of geese, all going in the same direction, in and out across the quilt. I did not want to put borders on the quilt. Our adventures are still continuing. The geese fly off of the quilt because we do not know where our next journey will lead us.

It is all paper-pieced and took 9 months from start to finish. It turned out so pretty I thought this could be my ticket to Houston. I told Tim what I was thinking and he was excited and up for the challenge. Tim Juhl did the quilting. I wanted to have a Celtic lovers knot in the center of the Mariner's Compass and have other Celtic symbols in the rest of the quilt. I am of Irish decent so I wanted to incorporate this into the quilt. I gave Tim some open spaces to add his signature to the quilt. I wanted this to be our ticket to Houston in 2010. Tim and I worked together on the quilting motifs and designs. We were keeping our fingers crossed. We were so thrilled when we got the letter announcing it had been selected as a finalist in the Innovative Pieced category.

Your quilt won an Honorable Mention at Houston in 2010, what was it like to get a call from the IQA (Houston) letting you know you that Stanza Della Signatura won an award?

My first thought was that they called the wrong number or got me mixed up with someone else. Then they said the quilt name and I knew it was for real. I started to cry. I was so overcome. *It was a dream come true.* It started out as a silly bet with my husband because I wanted to go to the IQF show in Houston. He said if I had a quilt in the show I could go. So the challenge was on. I was just thrilled to have a quilt in the show I did not really expect for it to receive an award. I was just thrilled. I would encourage every one if they have always thought their quilts were not good enough, to enter. You never know what will happen.

Hot off the press - Carol's quilt just received a Teachers's Award in the Innovative Quilting category at the Machine Quilter's Showcase in Overland, KS 2011.

What are you working on now?

I have a little bet with my husband. I want to go Ireland. When I saw Jim West's post on Facebook about the International Quilt Festival in Ireland in 2012, I knew this was my opportunity to go. I presented the idea to John. He smiled and said we could go if I had a quilt in the show. So the challenge is on. I purchased some wonderful hand dyes from Ricky and Justin at IQF. I think I am going to do a Rhapsody quilt. I am working on the design and I am going to work really hard on this one. It is my ticket to Ireland, LOL!!!!

Carol is also working hard on an entry for Houston 2011, keep on the lookout for another beautiful quilt.

How would you like to encourage others to share their work? I was feeling a little funny about doing this member profile. I guess I have never been a person to talk much about what I do. I thought what in the world to I have to say that would be interesting. Then I want to hear Pepper Corry speak at the IQF luncheon and it made me see things differently. She put together this wonderful presentation and it was how people all over the world have inspired others to learn to quilt. It was just wonderful. The last thing she presented was an angel called 'Patch'. The slide said 'Patch Says Teach someone to Quilt'. I guess this was a light bulb moment for me. I don't want people to think I am bragging or showing off but I do want to share my love for quilting and encourage others to share their work. If I can inspire or encourage someone to enter a show or to share their quilts then this article has fulfilled its purpose. The wonderful people I have met has been truly amazing. The friendships are priceless. So enter those quilt and just have fun!!!!

How did you hear about TQS? I was just looking through a quilting magazine in 2007 and stumbled across the ad. I joined in Nov. of 2007 and have been hooked ever since.

Why did you join? I don't have time to go to classes or belong to a guild so I thought it would be something that would work with my schedule.

What's your favorite part of the website? I LOVE it ALL!!!!