

Quilt for my niece

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One of my many nieces has been diagnosed with scleroderma. This past spring she developed pneumonia and was hospitalized. Since her family lives many miles away from most of us, nobody really understood the severity of her illness. You would think a 20 something would have no problem recovering from pneumonia, but 6 months later and she is still in the hospital, having overcome several bouts of pneumonia and other assorted infections. When it was clear that she would be in a care facility for a long time, the family rallied and began sending gifts to help her pass the time and give her a lift. And of course, whenever I am faced with the decision of what to send as a gift, the answer is A Quilt! I already had a quilt top mostly made that utilized a lot of solids. I envisioned a quilt with family signatures and space for her visitors and care givers to sign. She would be covered with love! I had made the quilt top approximately 4 years ago without any real purpose in mind. I even was able to walk over to my desk, open the drawer and put my hands on the leftovers that make up the border. Around Easter I had as many family members sign the actual quilt as possible. Others (from Maine, Florida and Oregon to Missouri) sent signatures on paper that I traced onto the quilt. So far the entire quilt was from my stash, but I didn't have a fabric I liked for the binding. Told my husband I had to go shopping and darned if he didn't move two pieces of fabric in my sewing room and find the perfect binding fabric! (I have now lost all credibility with him and can never go shopping again.) Finished the quilt, bought markers, boxed it up and shipped it off. Upon receiving the quilt, everyone in the care facility had to come and sign it. It was a huge hit! It was on my niece's bed for a while, but they have it on the wall now. The bright colors really help personalize the stark hospital room. My intention was a quilt made with love and prayers for her to show off and share, giving a place to focus attention and conversation away from her all the time. That has worked wonderfully and I'm so glad I did this! At our 4th of July party I had family members sign names and make comments on strips of paper that we made into a paper chain. This was mailed also and I see it is strung up over the quilt. Quite by coincidence, the colors of the papers perfectly match the quilt. I'm so thankful to have a hobby that gives such a perfect outlet to make connections with people and bring such comfort.