

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Dear Members and Friends in Quilting,

As a traveling quilt teacher, I have the privilege of seeing and meeting multitudes of quilters from across the USA as well as other countries where I have been invited. At shows, symposiums, and workshops, I enjoy viewing the multitude and variety of faces. But lately, the one type of face I feel is very minimally seen in the quilt related throngs are those under the age of 30. Sure, there are a few, but to keep our industry alive and vital we need many, many more.

Each of us needs to do what we can to encourage our younger family and friends to at least *try* quilting. We all know how rewarding the process of creating a quilt is. Now let us find a way to relay that experience to a young person.

I have tried to do this when the opportunity presented itself. When my younger daughter was in junior high, she told her art teacher that I was a quilter. Ms. Reynolds had me come to her class and give a presentation about quilting. At the end, Ms. Reynolds announced to the class that they would all be making quilts—and I knew she didn't have a clue about what she was getting into!

I volunteered to help and spent that class period for about six weeks going to the school. Though intimidated by the kids at first, I really began to enjoy the time that I spent with them. They created some fantastic quilts of which the students were extremely proud. My youngest son had the same art teacher a few years later, and I was actually quite disappointed that he didn't want me to do the same introduction to quilting for him and classmates! Of course, he was at the stage where he was *embarrassed* to be around his mother.

Both my daughter (who is 25 now) and my son (22) have participated in my quilting endeavors in the last year. Aubry and I collaborated on a quilt, and she and I plan to do several more together. Davyn helped me out in creating my 2005 Bernina Fashion Show garment by lending me his artwork to design digitized embroidery for the surface. I think he is quite intrigued by the possibilities of art in thread.

One very smart thing one of my local fabric/sewing machine dealers has done is put in a section of fabrics and notions especially appealing to teens. Here are some other suggestions I have for luring youth into quilting: Make a gift of a sewing machine. Either buy a low end machine, or give the young person your older model machine when you upgrade. Then offer to teach that person the basics of quilting.

When holding a bridal or wedding shower, have the guests help make a simple quilt as a gift for the bride or mother. And finally, many students in junior high and high school need to have some sort of service project to boost their academic record and scholarship possibilities. Suggest they do a quilting project for a woman's or homeless shelter and then help them with it.

Let's try to change the image of quilting as being an activity for oldsters. I believe our enthusiasm and passion for quilting can be passed on to the youths we know who have a need for a creative outlet and they can discover the joy of fabricating a cherished quilt.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlotte Warr Andersen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charlotte Warr Andersen
IQA President