

A Passion for Quilting Is Her Legacy of Love

This article was written at my request by Anita Lindahl, a 1969 graduate of North Park University and former COMPANION staff member, currently residing in Atkinson, NH. It highlights the craft of a quilting artist, now a resident of Covenant Village in Golden Valley, MN.

“While teaching elementary school, I didn’t give much thought to retirement and how I would spend my time. I knew that wherever my husband and I decided to live, our family and the church would occupy a major part of my life. I never imagined that I would discover quilting – a hobby that has become my passion,” says my mother, Signe Lindahl, with a smile.



After recently traveling to Minnesota to help Mom display her quilts at Covenant Village of Golden Valley, I

began to reminisce about her hobby and the joy it has brought to her life, as well as the special place she holds in the hearts of her family and friends.

Twenty years ago in a little shop in New England, a colorful quilt caught Mom’s eye. A spark was ignited! We snapped a photo and Mom was off and running. Having had previous sewing experience, all she needed was fabric and a few instructions. Soon odd terms like “fat quarters,” “rotary cutters,” and “paper piecing” became part of her vocabulary. One project led to another – special quilts, unusual wall hangings, table runners and placemats. She often laughed and said, “I can’t seem to stop!”

Living in a small town in the upper peninsula of Michigan purchasing fabric and finding new quilt patterns meant trips to Eagle River and sometimes Rhinelander, Wisconsin. Always proud of her achievements, Dad enjoyed these trips, patiently sipping coffee, waiting outside shops, or listening to music in the car. And back home, nothing brought him more joy than when someone asked to see Signe’s latest quilt projects.



Mom has filled her days with stitching - creating one unique quilt after another. We can hear the excitement in her voice as she discovers a new fabric or pattern and are always in awe of the finished project, sewn with precision and care. Dozens of lucky recipients have found comfort and joy in the cozy quilts she creates. Mom finds her inspiration in fabric and colors, television shows, magazines, taking classes, and grandchildren!

Teaching comes naturally for Mom, as she can light up a room with her smile and her enthusiasm is contagious. In her early years, she patiently taught first graders to read and write. Upon retirement, she taught quilting in the community schools. At eighty-three, Mom still teaches--sharing her love of quilting with residents of Covenant Village of Golden Valley. One friend who eagerly awaits the weekly classes, says, "I know that God sent Signe here just to keep me inspired about quilting!"



In 2005, a few years after Dad passed away, Mom became a resident of Covenant Village of Golden Valley. After decorating her apartment with quilt hangings and tossing a quilt on the bed, word got around that she was an accomplished quilter. Last month, my sister, Beverly, and I were privileged to join Mom as she hosted her second quilt show. More than 70 of her quilted items graced the Covenant Village walls. Conversations buzzed:

"She has a good eye for color and style."

"This must take a lot of thread."

"How intricate – all those curves."

"Thank you, this exhibit is really a gift that you've given us."

"What a thrill it was for us to hear over and over, "I suppose you know that you have a very special mother!"



Those who call her Mom, Grandma, Great Grandma, sister, or friend all know a patient, loving person--a bundle of energy who starts each day with joy and anticipation. Each quilt we've received as members of her family has been a gift from the heart and a memory to cherish. Mom smiles as she watches grandchildren snuggled beneath a quilt napping or watching television. And when our family gets together, there is always laughter and kidding about who will receive the quilt we've named "family feud," because we have been fighting over who will get it for years (one of Mom's last hand-quilted masterpieces).



Our mother has spent years of stitching together her faith, values, and love for family and friends. Her hobby and these wonderful keepsakes will always remain a legacy of love.

Posted 4/5/09