

They belong to a Seattle organization called Quilts From The Heart (QFTH <http://www.quiltsfromtheheart.org/default.htm>). QFTH donates machine-sewed quilts to hospitals, hospices, shelters and various group homes with the hope that they brighten the lives of recipients as well as keep them warm. Fabric stores and individuals help by donating fabric and quilt batting.

A new quilt for QFTH begins with Bonnie selecting and cutting the fabric. Then she lays out the 10 cm (4inch) squares of fabric on the living room carpet (picture, right). After she is satisfied with the design, she puts a label on each piece and then puts them in envelopes, each with a row of six or seven squares. Then comes George's part. He sews the squares of each envelope into a strip. Next, he assembles strips side by side into three sections that finally are joined to form the top of the quilt. Besides the usual equipment of a quilt maker, you see signs of his professional background in the small "alligator" clips, intended for electronic circuits, he uses for pinning, and his hemostats and forceps used for manipulating material and tying thread.



When George is finished with the top, he sews together the material Bonnie has selected for the bottom side. That layer goes on the living room floor, then the batting, and finally the top. After Bonnie places a safety pin in each square, the "sandwich" is ready for quilting. The dining room table catches the rolled up "sandwich" as George guides it through the Juki. Last comes the binding, made from 8 cm wide strips folded over. This is stitched onto the top side of the quilt, the corners are mitered, and the ends are joined. At last, a finished quilt appears as the binding is folded over the edge of the quilt and sewed on to the back from the top side, stitching, as they say in the USA, "in the ditch", as close as possible to the fold.

Each quilt has a personality and acquires a name during construction, so when it is time to give them away, they are a bit sad to see them go. But QFTH constantly receives messages of gratitude from the people who receive the quilts and George and Bonnie are happy to be part of the effort.

