

## Welcome to New Members!

If you recently joined or didn't have a chance to attend one of my new member meetings after the January or March meetings, please let this serve as your official welcome.

The guild was established in 1989 by 11 members and is continuing to reach out to quilters in Michigan, Ohio, and Ontario. Our membership is open, and in 2010 we had 423 members.

We are a non-profit organization, and as such we are required to assist a charity. The charity we have supported over the years is SAFE House, a shelter for survivors of domestic violence in Washtenaw County. The shelter provides various support services to survivors who take temporary refuge in the shelter as well as to those who are living in the greater community. Our guild's involvement is primarily two-fold: we raise money for SAFE House by means of a three-quilt raffle each year in November; and we ask that each member make at least one twin-size quilt per year. (Quilts should be no smaller than 60" x 80".) Each person who resides in the shelter leaves with a donated quilt. A large selection of donated fabric is available at each meeting for these quilts. (Members may purchase the donated fabrics for their own use, and those funds are turned over to SAFE House.)

We also make a yearly donation of \$2,000 to the Michigan State University Quilt Museum. When a member passes away, an additional \$25 is donated to the museum as a memorial. The guild's Education and Preservation Committee works on projects in conjunction with the work of the museum; that committee's information can be found on the inside front cover of the monthly newsletter.

We meet on the third Saturday of odd-numbered months at Washtenaw Community College's Morris Lawrence Building. The doors open at 8:30 a.m., and the meeting begins at 9 a.m. At 4 of the 6 meetings a local quilt shop sets up a display in the lobby, and many members arrive early to shop – an opportunity that is also available after the meeting. The guild receives a significant amount of donated fabric and once a year we sell all accumulated fabric by the pound and all proceeds are donated to SAFE House. The lobby area is also where you will find the SAFE House tables where fabric is available, as well as quilts in various stages of completion that you may take and finish for donation.

There is a featured speaker at each meeting, and most have national reputations. In addition to speaking at the Saturday meeting, the speaker teaches all-day classes on Friday and Sunday. Registration information for the classes is published in the newsletter approximately three months ahead. If the speaker has brought items for purchase, a vending area for that purpose is located in the lobby; this is only available after the meeting.

In addition to the featured speaker, the meeting consists of guild business and Show and Tell. Any member who has anything quilt-related is invited to take to the stage and show it off. People have shown off antique family quilts, works in progress, award-winning quilts, and everything in between. We love to hear the stories of special family events that have prompted the making of a quilt. A special segment of Show and Tell is devoted to quilts made for SAFE House. Following the meeting, members are invited to participate in Afternoon Alternatives – mini-workshops put on by various members.

The guild sponsors various quilting-related activities in which all members are invited to participate. At the July meeting, members clean out their sewing rooms, and we hold an indoor "garage" sale. In even-numbered years, we hold a non-juried quilt show, usually in late July. (The success of the show is heavily dependent on volunteers from within the guild.) In odd-numbered years, we have

Quilting Unlimited – a wide variety of classes spread across three days, usually the first weekend of August. In November, we have the raffle quilt drawing and the presentation of those proceeds and other SAFE House money collected through the year to the director of SAFE House. For the past nine years, the guild has had a year-long mystery quilt, with clues handed out at each meeting, and a show-and-tell at the November meeting. You must sign up for the mystery quilt by April 1 if you wish to participate in a given year.

Executive Board meetings are held at SAFE House the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. Members are welcome to attend all board meetings. Elected positions are: President, Vice President for Membership, Vice President for Programs, Secretary, and Treasurer. Elections are held in September and terms are one year with an optional second year possible. No one may hold the same office for more than two consecutive years. Other positions on the board are committee chairpersons, including Quilt Show, Quilting Unlimited, Newsletter, Nominations, Afternoon Alternatives, Education & Preservation, Public Relations, Raffle Quilt Chair, and others.

The guild has a Website, [www.gaaqg.com](http://www.gaaqg.com), which has a wealth of information and I encourage you to visit it regularly. Forms are available on the Website for membership, Quilt Show, and Quilting Unlimited. It is continually updated to provide a current calendar of events, speakers for the year and the upcoming month, the current newsletter, and the latest information on what's going on in the guild. You'll also find a Membership section where you can access the Guild Bylaws, Policies & Procedures, and most recent Member Directory. You will need the password on the back of your membership card to access this area.

Membership lists are produced monthly and the most recent version will be available online. Membership lists are for guild business only and they should not be used for solicitations of any kind. Generally we do not mail the directory or other member materials because of the cost. Please let me know if you do not have internet access and you will not be able to access the guild website.

The guild's newsletter is named Bits 'N Pieces and is mailed or emailed to members and advertisers. We publish six issues each year, and the newsletter is mailed the month before each meeting. There is also an electronic version which is posted on our website. There are forms in the newsletter for classes, membership, quilt show, and any other event that takes place. We attempt to keep our members informed on all upcoming events within the guild and the area. Many different quilt shops advertise in the newsletter, and these keep our members up to date on sales and specials. There is a list of contact persons on page 2 of each issue. Please feel free to contact any of these people to volunteer or to ask questions. All upcoming events are in the newsletter, and a list of meetings, speakers, and vendors is on the back cover.

I hope you will take the time to review the website, read the Bylaws and Policies & Procedures – many of the answers to the questions you may have can be found there. Contact emails are available on the website or in the Member Directory for questions unanswered elsewhere.

This is your guild, and your participation will make it great. The best way to meet people is to volunteer and to participate in any way you can. Welcome to the Greater Ann Arbor Quilt Guild!

Sonja Hagen, President  
GAAQG Executive Board  
GAAGQ Members