

# A DREAM COME TRUE...

Brenda Petrow

Karen Kortman, the new owner of the Bernina Sewing Center and Quilt Shop dreamed for a long time about being a quilt shop owner. Karen taught quilting classes for 14 years before she and husband Gary opened the shop in January. She says, "Everyone told me I should own a quilt shop. It's a dream that almost wasn't fulfilled."

Sometimes life gets in the way of dreams. The previous owner was selling the store and retiring at the end of 2008. Karen's daughter was getting married in September 2008. Karen knew that all of her time had to go into wedding preparations. So, she put quilting and the dream of owning a quilt shop on hold. However, not to be deterred, the Monday after the wedding, Karen and Gary contacted the realtor and put their purchase in motion. Karen says it moved fast and, at times, seemed overwhelming.

Karen's love of quilting is obvious. She added "Quilt Shop" to the store's name to emphasize its focus. She moved her computerized long-arm quilting machine out of her basement and into the store. She invites shoppers to watch the quilting process, which, she says, most find very intriguing. Fabrics sold at the store are 100% cotton and customers will find large backing fabrics, feet and notions to support and enhance their quilting experience. Karen is making sure that new fabrics on the market from Amy Butler, Kaffe Fassett, Michael Miller, and Moda are on the shelves. She says, "These fabrics give quilting a different look. And, they're not just for quilts. People love the bright, bold colors and use them for purses and bags, too."

Embroiderers will be delighted too. In addition to the numerous embroidery classes on the schedule, customers can take advantage of "Embroidery Take-Out." After browsing through a huge assortment of embroidery designs, they can take home exactly what

they want and need for their current project.

Karen is committed to expanding the sewing opportunities of visitors to her shop. The sewing class schedule she offers is extensive, including quilting, beginning and advanced sewing, embroidery, and kids' classes. She says there is a solid schedule of kids' classes for the summer. She wants to help move them into the sewing world we love and to which we are dedicated.

The class schedule at Bernina rotates on a quarterly basis and is expanding with the addition of new teachers and new topics. Karen is delighted to see sewers who haven't sewn for years come in for classes. She observes that by the time they leave, they already know what they're going to sew next.



Sewers looking for new machines will find many models from Bernina and Baby Lock for sale in the store. Karen offers classes to new owners free of charge to those who purchased their machine at Bernina. Didn't buy your machine from Karen? No

problem. For a small charge, you're welcome to join other new owners in class. In addition, a technician is available who services all makes and models of sewing machines. Machine accessories are available for sale as well. Karen and Gary consider Bernina Sewing Center and Quilt Shop to be a full-service shop for sewing machine owners.

Karen points out that the store is evolving. New fabrics arrive every day. Patterns for quilts and bags abound. The selection of books is expansive. Karen Kortman is among the authors that shoppers will find on the shelves. Look for her two books, "Take A Trip Around the World," a quilting book, and "Diamonds Are Forever," featuring a table runner. Both books offer patterns that are strip sewn, go together very quickly, and make wonderful gifts.

Karen welcomes Kalamazoo Sewing Guild members to her shop. She supports our community service projects and will gladly quilt the Quilts of Valor that

*CONTINUED ON PAGE 4:*

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many members are making. All she asks is that members provide batting, backing, and pay the thread charge. She also asks that members call ahead and let her know that the quilting project is a Quilt of Valor. She's happy to quilt them on a first-come, first-served basis.

In addition, she offers us a Frequent Buyer Card and points out that those who had one under the previous owner can continue to use it.

Browse the Bernina Sewing Center and Quilt Shop at:  
4205 Portage Street  
Kalamazoo, MI  
269-383-1244

**NEW MEMBERS**

**Welcome to our new members in ASG**

Julia Ann Nutt  
Louise Tennant  
Linda Bonamego

**RENEWALS**

**Thank you for renewing your membership.**

Susan Aebischer	Corky Hagemann
Mary Arnold	Shirley Hart
Karen Burnette	Christine Hollaway
Carmen Cronen	Anne Hutchison
Beverly Delisle	Janet Luchies
Annette Duchamp	Lucie Nigrelli
Carole Evans	Beverly Solik
Becky Fulgoni	Jean Marie Stafford
Carol Gant-Fowlkes	Marjorie Sweeny
Kathleen Garms	Marcia Van Vleet
Linda Godde	Denise Veenstra

Fran Webster

**TRANSFER MEMBER**

We are pleased to welcome Frances Michl as a transfer from the Louisville, KY chapter of ASG. She is moving to Battle Creek and will be joining the B.C. Neighborhood group in June.

**A Cautionary Tale for Sewers**

Do you find yourself using your mouth as a pin holder when you assemble a garment for sewing? That is something I've done for years - but no more. If I catch myself with a pin halfway to my mouth, I say, "Remember Danielle!" and the pin goes on the table.

My youngest sister, Biz, teaches beginning sewing in the fashion design program of a downtown Boston school. When she began, usually with students of very little sewing experience, her biggest fear was that someone would sew through their fingers. That has never happened, but something that seems far worse did.

One February afternoon a few students were working on projects in the open lab as Biz worked in her office next door. She was surprised when she looked up to see one of the doctors from the nearby physical therapy lab and sewing student Danielle standing at her door. It seems that Danielle had been using her mouth as a pin holder. In laughing at a funny remark by one of the others, the pin in her mouth was sucked down her throat - a yellow-headed quilters pin about 1.75 inches long! Both were amazingly calm.

The doctor said Danielle needed to go to the emergency room, but an ambulance was not necessary. As college policy dictated, a person from student services came quickly to take her there in a taxi. By the time they arrived an understandable bit of panic had set in for Danielle. Biz was amazed to hear there was discussion about letting it pass on through her body. By the time her parents arrived at the ER it was determined that the pin had passed into her stomach.

It was the next morning before Biz heard any more. To her amazement, Danielle appeared with the pin in a vial! She had been given a muscle relaxant so that a tube with a tiny camera could be put down into her stomach. The pin was located & vacuumed up. A lung doctor was standing by, but "the gastro doc was the hero of the day," Biz said. The plan was to make a display of the pin in the sewing lab as a reminder to other students. I wasn't even there & it scared me!

by Sadie - Editor