



Linda won Best Machine

Quilting and Best of Show in the 2014 KY State Fair competition. To enjoy more pictures of Linda's quilting artistry visit this website: <http://www.quiltersdayout.com/lindas-quilts.html>

Testimonials Are Us

Blessed with a Servant's Heart

Maybe Linda Sanford's love for sewing, especially quilting, came from her grandmother who was an excellent seamstress, but lived far away in Arkansas. Linda laughs, "I've had a needle in my hand sewing since I was big enough to hold a needle." Maybe Linda's mother-in-law, who also quilted, influenced her. Maybe Linda's eight-year-old granddaughter, Emma, inherited her love for sewing from her grandmother Linda who gave Emma a sewing machine at age six. Maybe? Well, whatever you think were the catalysts, don't try to tell Linda any of these things were coincidences.

Linda doesn't believe in coincidences, only Godincidences. Like having her high school sweetheart tell he'd marry her after graduation if she could get a job. At age 17 she graduated, secured a job with the KY Department of Transportation and had her wedding in the little Methodist Church in Graefenburg because her home church pastor told young people to wait until they were 25 to marry. It's no coincidence that Linda and Barry Sanford's marriage has outlasted the few months some people projected. Despite trials and tribulations some marriages could not have survived, the Sanfords have held on to each other and leaned on God to see them through those incidences. No coincidences there.

It's no coincidence that Georgia Carpenter, the Shelby County Bookmobile driver knew that the little girl she brought books to liked "hands-on books", as Linda says. So by age 10 the cookbooks she read let her take over the cooking for the family from her mother who was not as gifted in the kitchen. Linda was decorating cakes before she was eleven. She took the meat she was given, mostly chicken necks and wings, some days hamburger, and turned it into dishes for the family's supper. That was every day, every year until she and Barry were married.

Her culinary learning curve heightened when Barry brought beef and pork home from his family's farm. "They had cattle and pigs at the farm, I'd never cooked the crazy stuff he brought," recalls Linda. "What I had cooked before was just for survival." Learning to cook the better cuts of meat was a Godincidence, too.

Linda reflects on her soon to be 40 years as Linda Sanford and sees the incidences God was in as a matter-of-fact. Like her daughter's wish to be an acolyte in the Methodist Church near their home in Pleasureville giving them a reason to move their membership to that church. Linda lovingly served there in 14 different positions from teacher to council secretary. It was there she was introduced to the United Methodist Women's organization, which opened the door of service she holds dear.

In the new millennium, Linda became a UMW district officer. During a meeting at Kavanaugh, Linda met ladies from Centenary. Talking to Geri Roberts, Mae Travis, Mary Lou Madigan and Helena Kruer, she shared her love for quilting. "They told me they had a quilting group that met regularly and I started attending."

Following a grievous chain of events in 2007, Linda and Barry begin to seek a new church home. Because of her association with Centenary's quilters, the Sanfords decided to visit Centenary. She remembers talking to Pastor Mark Gibbons, "I can't tell if we're running from or running to something. Not sure." It was the morning messages they heard their first Sunday in Centenary that helped give her the answer. Mark's sermon was on Esther and Larry Crouch's Sunday School lesson on Jonah's instructions to go to Nineveh could only be called Godincidences. Linda says, "By Ash Wednesday, February 2008, I knew this is where we needed to be." They visited all the Sunday School classes until they found their niche in the Sanctuary Class where so many of her quilter friends were members.

Barry's challenge for her to seek employment after graduation gave her 24 years with state government beyond the time she took off while her two children were toddlers. A practice she adopted while Barry was in the National Guard was to "bake when he had drill weekends." Baking became a ministry Linda continued. The Pleasureville homemaker, mother of two, state employee and church servant would bake cookies, candies and more for family, friends, colleagues, shut-ins, church members, her doctor, her banker, and anyone else she thought of. She took her Christmas goodies as presents to more people than she can remember for 25 years.

When the Sanfords moved closer to Shelbyville, Linda called past recipients of her Christmas deliveries to invite them to come, pickup their treats during an open house. Now she includes her Shelby County friends for her annual Christmas affair. This year Linda made 14 different recipes of Christmas candies and cookies. Each recipe was doubled maybe quadrupled to produce 200 or more pieces each so she could prepare 55 "to go trays" for her visitors and still have plenty for the open house. Linda says, "I invite my friends, neighbors, family members. It grows." Then with a giggle she adds, "Barry says I get out of control."

Linda's mother once said, "Linda, you have a servant's heart." Linda believes God put her in certain places for her servant heart to work. In 2000 when she was made a UMW district officer, Linda felt God's hand in that appointment. When a dump truck plowed into Linda's van at an intersection near her home, Linda's friends called her survival of the wreck with limited injury a miracle. Short-term memory issues since the accident can still give her challenges, but she copes. Recently she was appointed to serve on the 2016 Nominations Committee of the Southeast Jurisdiction of UMW. Doing some quick calculations, Linda says, "In nine more years, I will have served in the UMW 25 years. I believe that God's not through with me yet."



While Visions of Sugar Plums Danced in Their Heads. . . Linda holds a tray of her Christmas fudge and cookies for a guest to take home. She made 14 different recipes of Christmas sweets for her guests attending the Sanfords' open house December 2015. She made about 2,800 pieces of cookies and fudge to give to family and friends.

Guests also enjoyed "Methodist Champagne", ginger ale and white grape juice.



Linda's home featured numerous nativities honoring the birth of Jesus, and 21 decorated Christmas Trees, each sporting a different theme.