

COFFEE CREEK QUILTERS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRISON INMATES STITCH WINNING QUILT

Coffee Creek Quilters Win 2009 Thimbleberries "Wish You Were Here" Quilt Challenge

Wilsonville, OR, October 19, 2009 – Inmates at the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility stitched the winning quilt in Thimbleberries' "Wish You Were Here" Quilt Challenge at Portland's 2009 Northwest Quilting Expo. The prize, a \$1,500 basket of Thimbleberries fabrics, was a welcome addition to CCQ's stash of fabrics for student quilts.

The project was a joint effort by students and teachers in the Coffee Creek Quilters program. Various students in the four CCQ classes made sampler blocks for the quilt, which was designed by Ann Johnson, a CCQ instructor and quilt designer. Other instructors pieced the blocks together and stitched the binding. CCQ volunteer Kayleen Davis machine-quilted the quilt.

Normally students in the CCQ program work on their own quilts, but the Thimbleberries project gave them the opportunity to work together on the same project. "We were working with a short deadline," said Johnson, "so it was a chance for students to learn about teamwork and time management as well as the precision skills needed for quilting. We're very proud of the students' effort."

The quilt is also known as the "Bishop's Quilt" because it was made as a gift for Bishop Sandy Hampton, an enthusiastic supporter of CCQ. Bishop Hampton is retiring from the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon.

For the students, the project was a confidence builder. The student who made the quilt's snowball blocks spoke for many of them when she said "I'm glad I got to work on the Bishop's Quilt. When I started the class, I had a hard time cutting the fabric straight. Now I've contributed to this beautiful quilt."

The challenge rules required that entrants use at least a half yard of any of the three Thimbleberries North by Northwest prints to create a project. The focus fabric in this series depicts postcards with Pacific Northwest landmarks in reds, blues, greens, and tans. Blue and red coordinating fabrics round out the collection.

Coffee Creek Quilters is a nonprofit organization that takes quilting classes to inmates at Oregon's Coffee Creek Correctional Facility. Each student in the program makes three quilts in weekly two-hour classes. The first two quilts are donated to a variety of charities that serve seniors in nursing homes, hospitalized children, terminally ill adults, and foster children. Every year approximately 150 quilts are donated to these charities. Students may keep the third quilt or give it to a loved one. Additional information about the program can be found on the organization's web site:

www.coffeecreekquilters.org

Thimbleberries is the brainchild of quilt and fabric designer Lynette Jensen of Hutchinson, Minnesota. Jensen designs distinctive fabric lines, released several times a year in coordinated collections by RJR Fabrics. She has also published books and quilt patterns with detailed instructions for making quilts, wall hangings, table toppers, pillows and other home decorations. Additional Information about Thimbleberries can be found on their web site: www.thimbleberries.com

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