

Celeste business featured in national quilting magazine

Written by Betsy Blevins
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May 19, 2011 - Quilt Mercantile, a quilt shop in Celeste, was chosen as one of the 11 featured shops across the United States for the Spring 2011 issue of Quilt Sampler magazine, published by Better Homes and Gardens.

Quilt Sampler, published twice a year, has been profiling North America's top quilt shops for the past 14 years. Quilt shops submit a detailed application on their history, business promotions, charitable work, teaching schedules and design philosophies. A panel of quilt experts led by Jennifer Keltner, group editor of American Patchwork & Quiltings magazine, narrows down the applications to ten featured shops for each issue. The team also selects an "encore" shop that was featured in a past issue to revisit. The names of the selected shops are kept secret and unveiled at either the spring or fall International Quilt Market.

Competition to be included in Quilt Sampler is keen. Nearly 3,000 quilt shops were eligible to apply for this year's honor. Quilt Mercantile and the other ten shops chosen were photographed and interviewed by a team from Quilt Sampler, and a multi-page profile of the shop will appear in the issue, which was available on newsstands on May 10. Employees of each quilt shop also design an original quilt for the magazine, and the full-sized pattern for the quilt appears in the issue of Quilt Sampler.

Quilt Sampler has proven to be a huge success, and early, out-of-print issues are collector's items. Chosen shops are inundated with visitors and requests for the shop's quilt patterns and fabrics. Quilters are known to try and visit all the shops in each issue, getting the signature of each shop owner in their copy of the issue.

The art of quilting has changed dramatically since the days of quilting bees in church basements, with quilting enjoying a major renaissance across the country. A Comprehensive

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Study of the Quilting Marketplace, released in 2003 by American Patchwork & Quilting magazine, reports that the U. S. quilting market is comprised of 11 million households. The total value of the U. S. quilting industry has grown to an annual expenditure of \$2.7 billion. Further research shows that readers of American Patchwork & Quilting spend an average of \$1,121 per year on quilting supplies and complete nearly 10 projects per year. This group is overwhelmingly female, well-educated, affluent and have been quilting for more than twelve years.

The other 10 shops featured in the Spring 2011 Quilt Sampler include Quilted Threads in Henniker, NH; Friends and Co. Quilt Shop in Cody, WY; The Wild Rose Quilt Shop & Retreat in Orting, WA; Gathering Friends Quilt Shop in Bird Island, MN; Hearts to Holly Quilt and Gift Shop in Charlevoix, MI; Yellow Creek Quilt Designs in Pearl City, IL; Karen Gray Designs in Winston-Salem, NC; Tennessee Quilts in Jonesborough, TN; Quilt Passions in Kailua-Kona, HI and Back Porch Fabrics in Pacific Grove, CA.

For additional information on Quilt Sampler, or for an interview with American Patchwork & Quilting group editor Jennifer Keltner, contact Mary Irish at Better Homes and Gardens Creative Collection at 515/284-2681 or at mary.irish@meredith.com.