

Barn Quilts



**Upstate Heritage Quilt Trail
South Carolina**

<http://www.upstateheritagequilttrail.org/>



**By Kim Bearnese, Extension Educator
Stanton County Nebraska**

Early Beginnings



- 300 years ago –
 - Religious Freedom - immigrants settled in Pennsylvania (Rhine region of Germany -Amish, Mennonites, Lutherans and other Reform groups)
- Small design decorated barns – paint was expensive
 - Designs - to protect the farm f- bring good fortune
 - Good way to direct travelers – look for particular design
- 1830 to 1840's – began artisan trade - paint less costly

Barn Quilt Origination - 2001

- Donna Sue Groves, Manchester, (Adams County OH)
- To honor her mother & Appalachian heritage

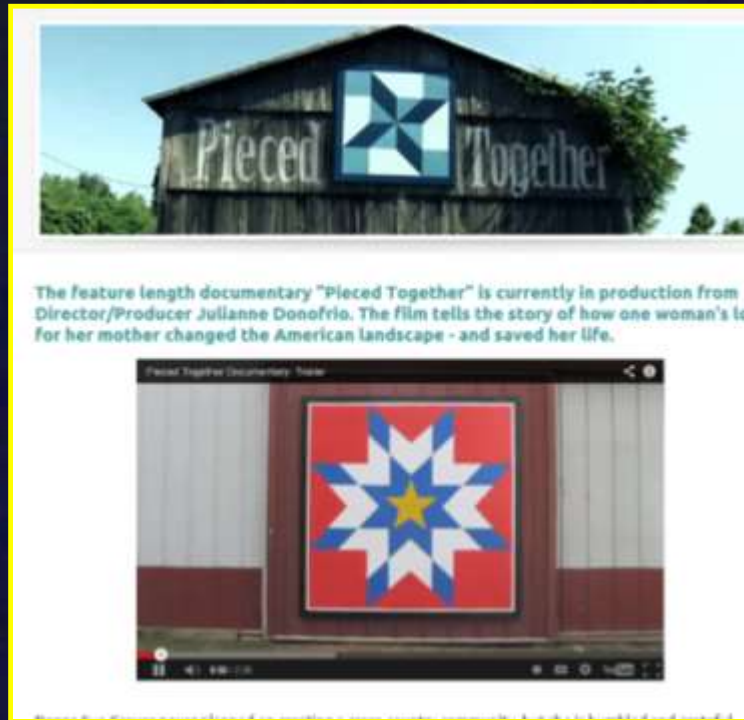


“Launched largest grassroots arts movement in USA & Canada.”

Suzi Parron, Historian & Author

Documentary (2015-16)

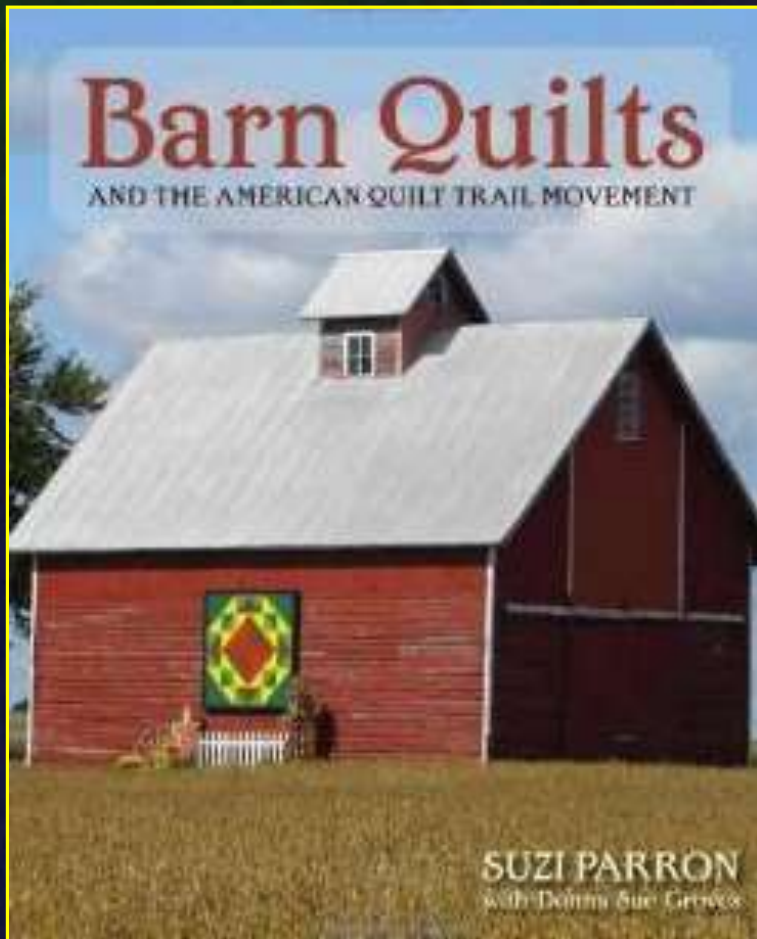
Pieced Together: A Documentary about Donna Sue Groves



The feature length documentary "Pieced Together" is currently in production from Director/Producer Julianne Donofrio. The film tells the story of how one woman's love for her mother changed the American landscape - and saved her life.

www.piecedtogetherdoc.com

Suzi Parron: Barn Quilt Historian, Author, Speaker



Geneva, NE - April 9, 2014

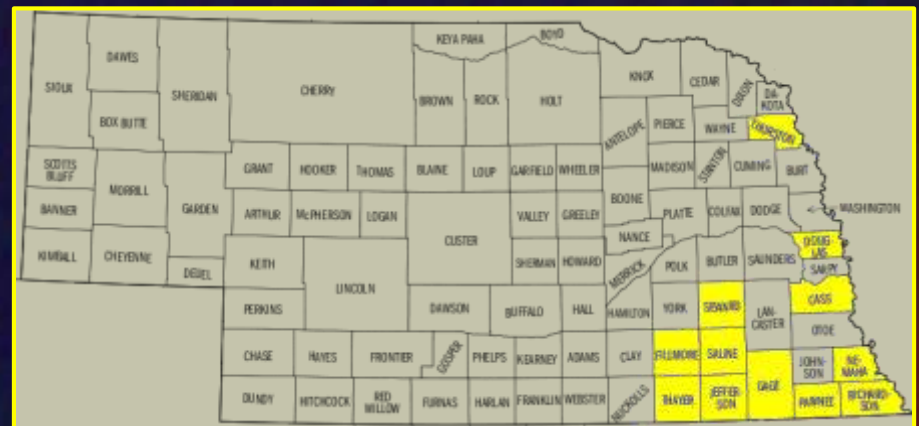
<http://barnquiltinfo.com/>



Clickable Map



Quilt trail began in Ohio, then Kentucky & south east – and then westward – 47 states have Barn Quilt Trails



<http://barnquiltinfo.com/map-US.htm> & <http://visitsoutheastnebraska.org/counties/>

Movement West

Greene County, Iowa



Design Application



Painted board




Painted directly on the barn



PHOTO BY



Pender Barn Quilt Promotion




Barn Quilts of Pender
601 Maple Street
Pender, NE 68047

Barn Quilts of Pender Nebraska

Threads from the Past

Communities are like quilts
Lives pieced together
Stitched with smiles and tears
Colored with memories
And bound by Love.




How Did the Barn Quilt Project Start in Pender?

Imagine the excitement when a group of women from Pender went on a road trip through Iowa — and spotted unique, eye-catching quilt block creations on barns. Seeing the quilts planted the seed for duplicating the project in the Pender area — and to beautify our own community. After thinking about how this project could become a reality, the committee planned and designed the first eight wooden quilts as a summer project in a member's garage. From designing, sanding and then painting the boards, the hours spent together in friendship, conversations and a spirit of working on a collaborative project was launched. After many weeks of preparing the boards, the first eight quilts were hung, and the interest of the community was immediate. From that time on, more and more quilts were made and displayed throughout Pender and the countryside in celebration of the Pender Q125 Celebration. The committee feels that this project was one that brought people together, continues to be a spark of energy throughout our community and demonstrates a value for the heritage art of quilts beyond Pender's Q125.

What are Barn Quilts?

First, a little history about quilts in general. Quilts are undoubtedly a craft that has been practiced by women of all ages, in all stations of life and in all countries. It is a universal craft — the making of warm bedding from available material to help keep the family warm through cold winters. Many quilt patterns can be directly related to the regional people who made them, whether they were natives or immigrants.

The word "quilt" comes directly from the Latin word, "culcita," which translates to the word "cushion." Since most quilts involve the joining of materials over a batting or cushion of some sort and then a bottom layer, it's an appropriate translation. Cloth was fairly scarce in the early settlements of America and immigrants saved every piece of clothing, even after it no longer fit or became tattered and worn. Pieces were cut and sewn together to create colorful patterns for the quilt tops and made for use by the immediate family as well as being made for gifts upon weddings, births and to give to friends, children and grandchildren. Even old quilts that were worn beyond use were used as the inside batting for other quilts.

In the making of quilts, the art of the quilt was born. Women started using shared patterns in their work, creating new ones and beginning the art of appliqué on many of them. It has been said that appliqué art was born out of the need to repair a ripped or torn quilt that otherwise was still useful.

Vast differences in the use of colors and increasingly difficult patterns developed. Quilts had come into their own as an art form. Quilts are now considered a true folk art genre.

The Barn Quilt Emerges

Anyone who recognizes barn quilts for what they are knows they were originally conceived by Donna Sue Groves

of the Ohio Arts Council. The story goes that on long road trips, she and her family would play games counting regional signs, such as Chew Mail Pouch. When driving through Pennsylvania, she loved looking at the hex signs on the barns of the Pennsylvania Dutch.

Donna Sue and her mother purchased a farm in Adams County, Ohio, on which there was a large tobacco barn. Donna Sue's mother was a generational quilter, and Donna Sue promised her mom she'd paint one of her quilt block patterns on the barn to make it more colorful. Always interested in art, she knew the power of public art and knew that it could serve as a catalyst for community expression and more tourism to the county.

In 2001, Donna Sue Groves made good on her promise to her mother and, with the help of Peter Whan of the Nature Conservancy, helped to create her grassroots beginning of the Adams County Quilt Barn Sampler. They created a driving trail, and with many volunteers, the first of many barn quilts was unveiled: The Ohio Star on Oct. 13, 2001. In 2003, the project was officially dedicated to Nina Maxine Groves, Donna Sue's mother, and in the summer of 2003, her quilt square, a Snail's Trail pattern, became a reality.

A National Quilt Trail has already spread from New York to Georgia. There are well over 400 quilt squares installed on barns, floodwalls, sheds and other significant community structures. All projects adopted by each county has its own similarities, but the message is always the same: capturing the spirit of each community in art and heritage.

The official trail throughout Kentucky is called The Kentucky Quilt Trail and Fleming County is proud to be a part of the process. With over 50 in the county alone and more responding to the opportunities to put beautiful works of art on their structure, there promises to be many more.




200+ Barn Quilts - Pender 125th Celebration

Celebration June 2010

Population 1002



Nuckolls County Nebraska



Duane (Tub) Drohman in the Massey-Harris Museum in Ruskin, NE



Dennis Schoff farm, Ruskin, NE

Jefferson County, Nebraska



Philip Heidemann Farm
Daykin, NE



William Ebke - Daykin, NE
4-H and FFA Quilt Blocks - Jefferson County Fairgrounds - 2012

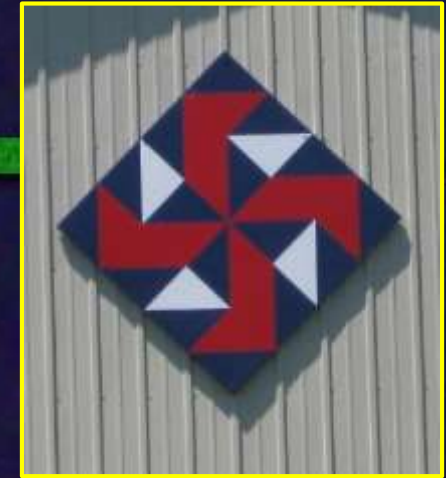


Fillmore County



Fillmore County Fairgrounds





As the Barn Quilt movement progresses – designs seem to become more complicated



More Complex Pattern



Renaë Kamler's Barn Quilt - honor of her grandmother

Painted by Shickley NE art students

Gage County

National Homestead Movement 150th Anniversary - 2012



Scavenger hunt on grounds/trails for quilt blocks

GPS – Geo caching

Barn quilt workshops

Gage County Fairgrounds

So, What's a Barn Quilt?

Each one of us probably has a memory associated with a quilt. Perhaps you received one as a gift to commemorate a special occasion, or you slept under one when you visited Grandma.

For hundreds of years, quilts have played an important role in the lives of people and families around the world.

In 2003, an Ohio woman, Donna Sue Groves, wanted to honor her mother, who was a 5th generation quilter and draw attention to an historic tobacco barn on her property. So... she painted a quilt block on the side of the barn... and the Barn Quilt was born!

Before long, people were asking how they could paint one on their barn or granary. From that simple beginning, the idea has grown.

Consisting of wood and paint instead of fabric and thread, barn quilts serve as reminders of our pioneer heritage, our agricultural roots, and at the same time, add beauty, color and folk art to our landscapes.

Today, Barn Quilts can be found in a variety of sizes, and not only on barns. They are found on garages, in flower gardens, parks, along roadsides, and in front yards.

The Gage County Agriculture Society, along with Gage County 4-H clubs, members and families, has one of the first fairgrounds in the state of Nebraska to have a Barn Quilt Trail, honoring both our agricultural and quilt heritage. Follow the trail to discover the beauty and variety of the patterns, each with a tie to our past... and to our future.

THANK YOU

Thanks to the following organizations, businesses and individuals for development and support of this Barn Quilt Project.

- Larry and Kay McKinzie, Beatrice
- Don and Bev Ewer, Beatrice
- Ann Reimer, Beatrice
- Lucas and Mary Gleason, Beatrice
- Beatrice High School Auto-Cad Class
- Austin Goossen, Student
- Charles Brockman, Instructor
- Kristine Dorn | Bahr-Vermeer-Haecker Architects, Lincoln
- Sack Lumber, Beatrice
- 4-H Clubs and Families of Gage County
- Women for Racing
- Gage County Agriculture Society



Fun Facts

- 14 different colors were used
- 91 containers were used to hold the paints needed for the 38 quilt block kits used by the painters
- Most used color: Red, followed by blue and green
- Least used color: Pink, used only in Carnival Time and Rosebud
- Smallest number of colors used in a block: 2
- Largest number of colors used in a block: 6



Covering the Gage County Fairgrounds with quilts

Beatrice, Nebraska



18 Barn Quilts made same year as Homestead 150th Celebration





Specialized

Enlarged heritage
picture of family
applied as barn quilt



Workshop Preparation

- Planning
- Promotion
 - Flyer/brochure
 - Facebook
 - News Articles written
 - Registration Fees
 - Timing (length) of workshop
 - One day or two evening workshops
- Workshop supplies (see following slides)
- Power Point Presentation
- Handouts

Barn Quilt Size

- Large – 8' x 8' (two full boards)
- 48" x 48" (1/2 sheet of purchased board – cannot get into car trunk/SUV tailgate)
- 40" x 40" – can get into car trunk
- 24" x 24"
- Tiny (mailbox)



(Check on cutting capabilities before boards are cut)



Miscellaneous Supplies

- Computer/projector to show ppt;
- Handouts (shortened version of ppt; “formula” for designs)
- Tarps for floor; table covering
- Painters tape – 1 roll per two participants (if they work on 4x4' boards)
- Pencils, paper; plastic cups; sandwich bags;
- Foam brushes ... or
- Paint brushes (cheap brushes leave streaks)
- 3' and/or 4' yard sticks (straight edge); transparent quilting ruler
- Sharp edge tool (xacto knife, razor blade)
- Rulers or popsicle sticks to burnish tape down
- Hair dryers (to dry paint between coats)
- Trash containers;
- Container/Water for cleanup

Design Ideas

<http://www.ohiobarns.com/otherbarns/quilt/quiltbarns.html>

<http://www.grundycountya.com/play/barn-quilts/barn-quilts-sites>



- Quilt Design Software (Electric Quilt, Quilt Pro etc.)
- Google Images (type in “Barn Quilts”)
- Pinterest (search for Barn Quilts)

Design Formula...

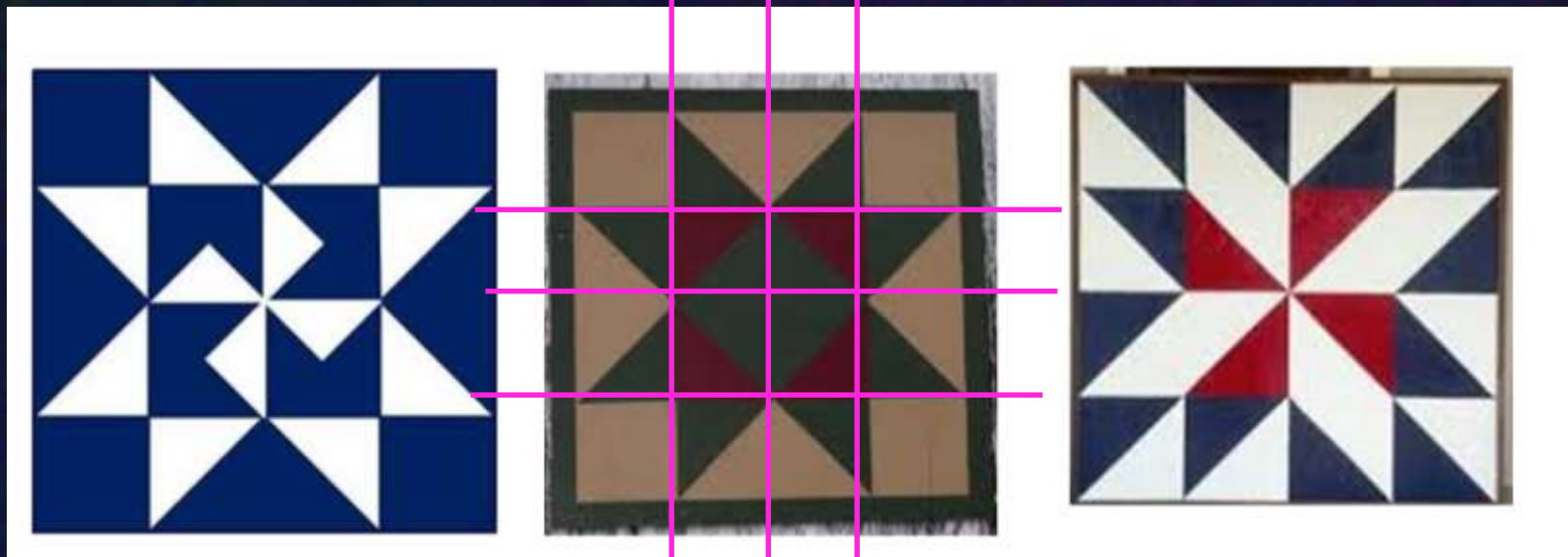
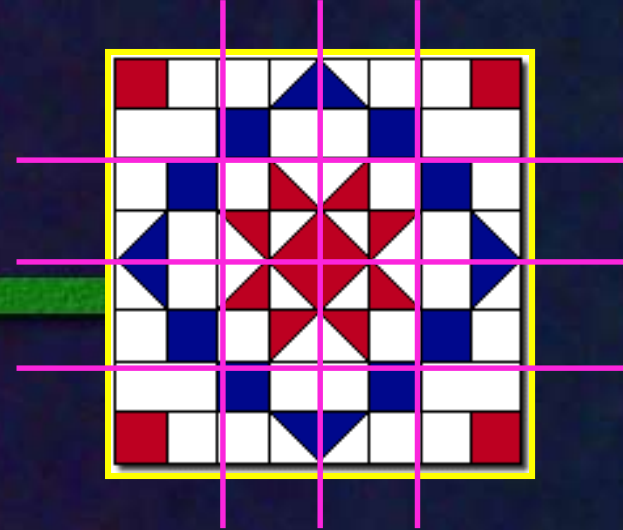


- Participants may be intimidated by quilt designs
- Analyze blocks
 - Most blocks can be easily dissected –
 - Help ease participants mind for designing their board

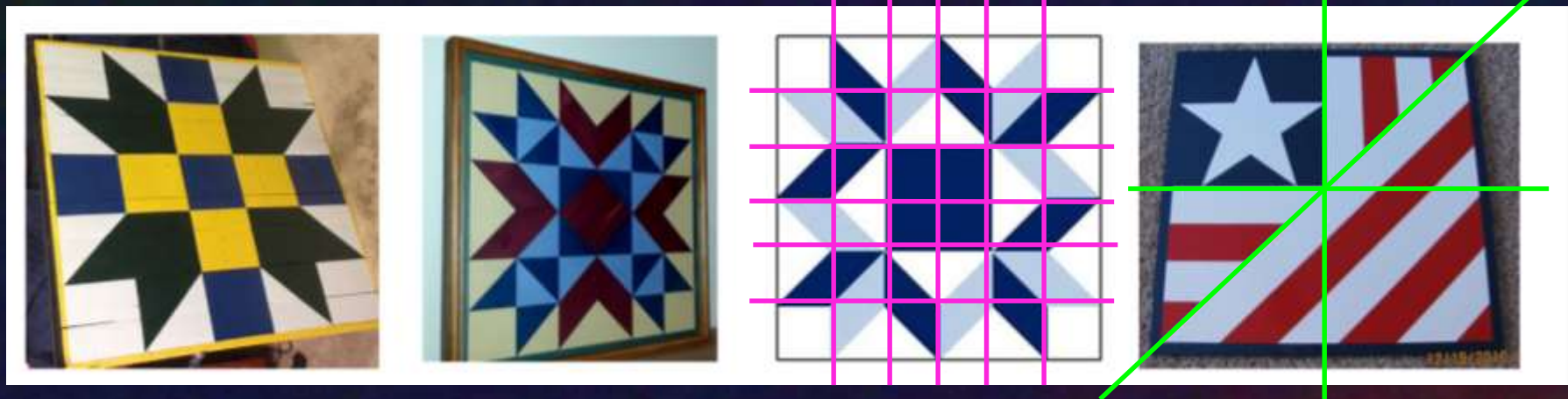
Divide Pattern by 1/3s



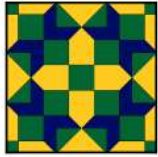
Design by 1/4^{ths}



Design by $\frac{1}{5}^{\text{th}}$, $\frac{1}{6}^{\text{th}}$



Abstract Flag is $\frac{1}{4}$ of Barn Quilt Block



Making Your Barn Quilt

Supplies:

- Two—4 x 8 foot 3/4" MDO board, sometimes called sign board—available at some lumber yards; call to reserve
- Cardboard or plastic to cover the floor
- Saw horses or table top
- Diamond Vogel Sure Grip Latex Primer
- Pencil for drawing pattern
- Measuring tape, yard stick, or framing square
- Painters tape or masking tape
- Razor blade or craft knife
- Can opener
- Self-Stick notes of your design colors
- Foam roller and paint tray
- Brushes—2" angle for Latex paints
- Paint
- Diamond Vogel V Cote 222 Maintenance Semi-Gloss
- Diamond Vogel Nu-Cling Latex Enamel Satin Finish
- Plastic containers used for paint
- Paint stir stick
- Paper towel or rags
- Six-8 foot cedar 2 x 4's
- Gorilla Glue
- Clamps
- Two inch torque screws
- 3 3/4" wide, 8 foot tin strip to cover top ledge
- "L" brackets

Steps:

Painting

1. Select your quilt pattern or design your own.
2. Set up a work area that is dry and dust free for painting.
3. Prime the two Medium Density Overlay (MDO) boards using a foam roller and the high quality primer.
4. Enlarge the quilt pattern using graph paper or another preferred method to scale leaving a three inch border on all sides. Then draw the pattern on the primed boards using a pencil and measuring devices.
5. Using the tape, outline the areas that will receive the lightest paint color and press the tape firmly to ensure a good seal.



Hint: Use a razor blade or craft knife to cut definite angles in the tape. To help designate which areas receive which color you can place corresponding colored self stick notes in those areas. This would be very helpful with a pattern using multiple colors. If you do not connect the two boards it will be easier to paint the center.



MDO - Medium Density Overlay Plywood

• MDO (Medium Density Overlay-resin on one or both sides often used for outdoor signs –

- Small town lumber yards may not know about MDO
- **NOT MDF**

• OR USE -- Exterior Grade Plywood Sheets – one side smooth

Iowa State University handout found at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/nr/rdonlyres/ba0ae05f-eb22-4944-a8d2-7cf99885f3a9/77655/flplymouthcountysubarnquiltldirections.pdf>

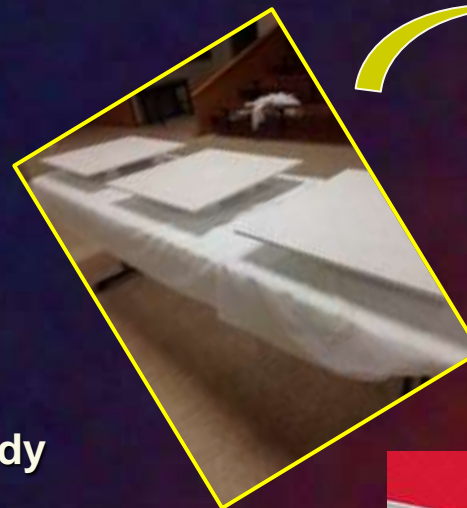


Prime Boards First

- Need 5 gallons primer for 36 - 4x4' boards
- **Kilz Exterior Grade Primer** — (not product endorsement but suggestion by lumberyard personnel – be sure to use “outdoor” grade)
 - **Exterior grade** (protect wood & prevent stain seeping)
- 2 coats on flat (top/bottom) surface; 4 coats on edges
- For darker colors – put some black into white primer



Nuckolls County – 34 Barn Quilts – primed & ready



Set boards
on cups to
prevent
sticking

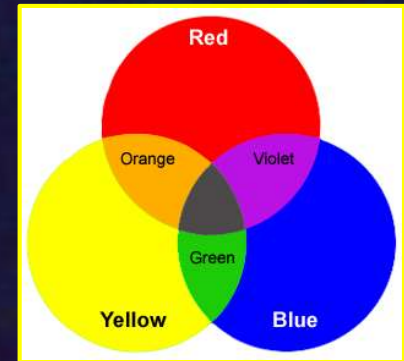


Saves a lot of time

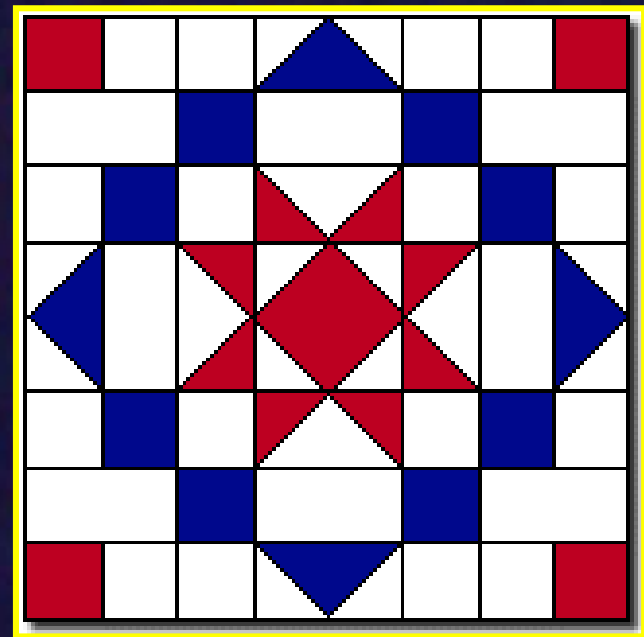
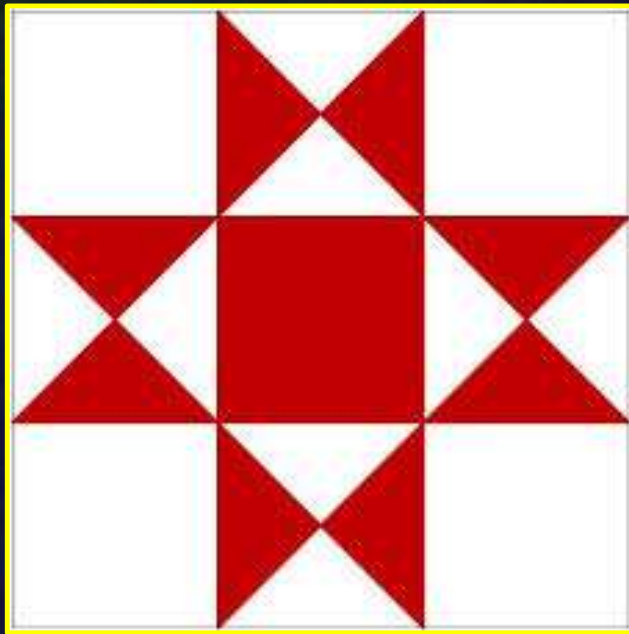


Exterior Grade Paint & Color

- Primary & Secondary colors are noticed better from a distance
- Your Choice of Paint Brands
- Exterior/Outdoor Paint
- Exterior “COLOR”
 - “Interior” colors can fade faster
 - Little House indicates color can be used on Exterior Color.



Straight Lines > Simpler with Painters Tape



Curves – More Challenging



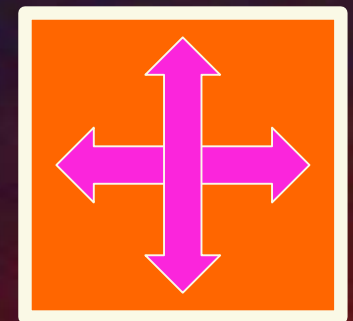
Difficult to outline with painters tape



Border



- Some believe a border around the outside edge looks “professional”
 - Border “stops the design”
- If adding border – do it first – THEN MEASURE space for block design inside
- 3” on larger size



Draw Design on Board





Measure, Measure, Measure



'Transparent' quilt ruler is helpful

Measuring will be your biggest challenge to teach!!!

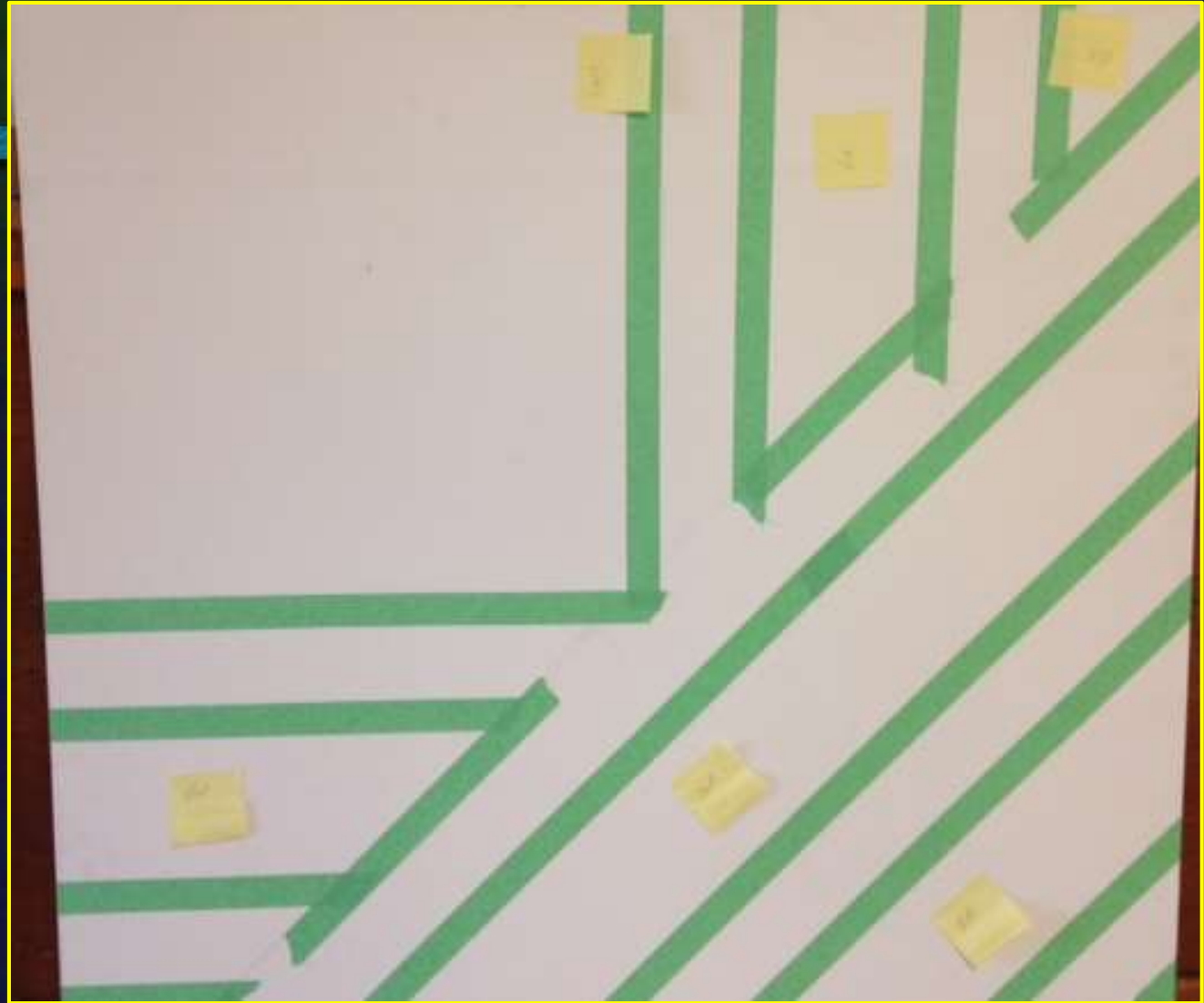


Tape Area to Paint





**Mark areas for
different paint
colors with
sticky notes**



Burnish Tape Edges

Press tape down with fingers first – then burnish with straight edge



For rough edges ... paint over the edge of the painters tape with base/background color first – if seepage it will be same as background – then add another color



Paint first section

Sticky Notes to tell color for each section



**Preferred -
Let dry/cure
overnight**

**then tape
next section**



Paint more than one coat



Some paint does not cover well



In workshop setting - use
Hair Dryer to dry paint

Drop clothes work great.





Add Second Color of paint...



Additional Colors



Hair dryers and fans help dry the paint!!



Older 4-Hers are great mentors,
let them help!!!



Final Coating...

Your Determination.....many people do not add additional coating

- May help prevent crackling & peeling
 - Catalyzed Lacquer (one contractor recommends)
 - Water based polyurethane
 - Boat sealer – Yellow?
 - Spray acrylic enamel – clear coat interior-exterior (Suggested by artist who creates motorcycle helmet designs.



Hanging the 8x8' Quilt



Use
appropriate
tools

Kamler Barn Quilt

Side of a Sturdy Structure



Betty & Larry Edzards
Bruning Nebraska

Reinforce Structure If Necessary

Reinforce back of barn door before application



Quilt reinforced to hang in one piece



Dwight & Barb Schmidt , Fairbury



In Pawnee County NE – local power company partnered with 4-Hers to use boom equipment at not cost for 4-H Barn Quilt project.

Barn Quilts

Kim Bearnes
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