



Thimbles & Friends Quilt Guild Newsletter

Volume 26 • Issue 9 April 2025

Board and Committee Members 2024– 2025

Chair: Janice O’Gara

Co-Chair: Doris Furness

Treasurer: Julia Blanchard

Co-Treasurer: Joanne
Cummings

Secretary: Deborah White

Charity: Shirley McLeod

Facilities: Pat McCollem

Membership/Hospitality:
Phyllis Barry

Newsletter Editors:
Taryen Shannon, Wendy Foley

Web & Social Media: Sarah
Norris

Programming Coordinators:
Wendy Moore, Wendy Foley

Principal Officer: Wendy Moore

Guild Website:

<http://www.thimblesandfriendsquiltguild.org>

Newsletter Note: Click on any picture or the blue hyperlinks to see the Web page sources.

We would love to hear from you!

All guild members are invited to submit articles for this newsletter. Please write your own articles and e-mail them to us no later than the 20th of the month to allow us time to process each article before distribution by the 25th. If there is no newsletter for any month, we will save your article for a future publication.

- Taryen & Wendy F.



2025-2026 Meeting Dates

The Guild meeting dates have been confirmed for 2024 at The Abington Public Library. Meetings are scheduled from 10:15 AM to 2:00PM:

May 3, 2025	Annual Tea Party	
September 20th		
October 4th		
November 1 st		
December 6th	HOLIDAY PARTY	
January 3rd 2026		
January 31st		
February 12 th -15th	Retreat	
March 7th		
April 4th		
May 2nd		

From the Chair

What a great ride I had with the honor of being Co-Chair and Chair of Thimbles and Friends guild.

I remember Wendy encouraging me to be her Co-Chair at the senior center outside during Covid. I was such a timid thing; it was scary sitting in front looking at all of your faces... looking back at me.

Wendy has always had my back and has become a lifelong friend. I harken back to chatting with Phyllis and her encouraging words as I transitioned to Chair. Cheryl also helped when I felt uncertain. So many guild members are now my lifelong friends. Saying thank you seems a little thing, but during those times of apprehension, hearing a positive word did make a difference. So, as this chapter closes, I can look back and know it was a lot of fun and even my writing skills became better.

I know that Doris will do a wonderful job as well as Julia as her sidekick.

Since joining the guild, I have had a tremendous number of laughs, whether I served as Quilt Show or raffle coordinator, being a host for a Christmas party or on the retreat fun committee. This is a great group of women who encourage and uplift each other. Along with an enormous amount of talent and generosity.

Thank you, Thimbles and Friends, for blessing me with smiles and joy along the way,

- *Janice*



Programming

May 3rd we will be having a Tea Party for Thimbles and Friends. This is our last meeting before the summer break. Bring your own **lunch**, **teacup**, and **flower decoration** for your place setting. If anyone has an Insta-Pot, to heat hot water, could you bring it please. We're going to play a few games and there will be some prizes. My team has lovingly made a gift for each member and yes, we're making some desserts. It'll be fun! Looking forward to our last meeting.

We ask you to please arrive at 10:30 to give us time to set up Thank you.

- *Suzanne, Beverly, MaryAnn, and Rhonda*



Membership/Hospitality

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Our last meeting of the year is May 3rd. As stated in the Guild Policies, Membership dues for the next year **must be paid by the May 31st deadline**. We have reached a total of 40 members, which is our limit. With a waiting list and requests by potential new members, we can no longer accept payment of dues after the May 31st deadline. Please bring your \$35 payable to Thimbles and Friends Quilt Guild to the May 3rd meeting.

If you are unable to attend the last meeting, you may mail your check to:
Julia Blanchard, (our current Treasurer), 27 Bridle Rd., Bridgewater, MA 02324, Joanne Cummings, (the new Treasurer), P.O. Box 1013, 60 Littles Ave., Pembroke, MA 02359 or Phyllis Barry 796 South Ave., Whitman, MA 02382.

HOSPITALITY

Please send me an email (or text me at 617-833-9176) if you or you know of another member who is ill, planning surgery or has had a family member pass away. I will send out a card from the Guild and notify other members of any information you pass on to me.

- Phyllis Barry Pbarry1022@comcast.net



Susan McDonald Trunk Show

Another Thimble & Friends Amazing Talent!



Thanks for Sharing



There are only 2 more months to create, sew and submit your 2025 Peggy Beals lighthouse Quilt block for this year's contest at the Marshfield Fair. All entries must be postmarked no later than **June 1**. Be bold and be a part of this year's contest.

Here are the details:

Theme: "Lighthouse"

Sashing: TBD

Method: Using 100% cotton, make a traditional pattern, appliqué, or an original design.

DO NOT back the block.

Size: Block should be 12 1/2" unfinished.

Prizes: 1st - \$50, 19 Runners-up- \$15

Quilt pin for the 25th block entered.

Also: A Viewers' Choice Award will be given

Mail Entries To: PBQBC, Laurel DeCastro, 769 Union Street, Marshfield, MA 02050

Deadline: June 1, 2025

Marshfield Fair cannot be responsible for the blocks, but we've never lost one yet.

To Submit:

1. Attach entry form to back of each block with safety pin. You may submit any number of blocks only one can win.
2. Photograph your block before you send it!
3. Enclose your email address and indicate if you want to know your block got here safely and on time.
4. For winners and next year's information after judging, enclose a stamped, self- addressed long envelope marked "winners" in the lower left hand corner.
5. For judges' comments, add "comments" on that corner.
6. For return of non donated block, enclose self addressed 6x9 envelope with adequate postage attached.
7. Blocks donated, unspecified or without return envelope as described above are made into quilts for charities.
8. The junior competition is for youth ages 5 - 18. All the above rules and entry dates apply.

ENTRY FORM 2025

Name _____

Email _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Return Block

Donate Block

(Check one)

We look forward to seeing your creations!

Yours in Quilting,

Laurel and Pam





<http://www.caseforsmiles.org>



Click on the pdf for step by step instructions and also the pdf for fabric selections.

- *You do not have to enter the challenge to make a difference! We are requesting that each member make at least one pillowcase. From cutout to finish it is only 40 minutes, a very small amount of time to bring joy to a child who is facing the unthinkable.*
- *Thanks to Joyce Hockstrasser, we have "partnered" with Dress a Girl. They often have fabric that is not appropriate for the girls. (characters, food, animals, flannel) Many of us have lots of floral fabric that they can use. I have set up an exchange with Evelyn Delutis the coordinator for Dress A Girl, we have already made an exchange. I have pillowcase fabric if you need some - just email or text me.*
- *In addition, a collection point for anyone making the cases has been set up at the Bridgewater Senior Center, a clearly marked container is in the foyer. Anytime the center is open you can drop off the cases.*
- *I have included the guidelines and instructions. **Please note - the pillowcases do NOT have to be washed. The State Coordinator will wash and sanitize the cases before distribution.***
- *These cases currently will go to Children's Hospital, Mass General Hospital for Children, Boston Medical and soon to Children's Hospice.*
- *The challenge remains to make as many as you can by our retreat in February. There are fabulous prizes - but the biggest reward is in knowing you were able to make a child a little more joyful.*
- Wendy M





A message about benefits of volunteering from www.pointsoflight.org

It's what each member does to sew quilts and pillowcases to donate, and to accept the responsibilities of positions to help keep our Thimbles and Friends Guild running effectively and fun for members.

- *Deborha white*





ADMINS: LARISSA, NORMA AND CAILIN

WELCOME TO THE QUILT BLOCK EXCHANGE GROUP

Do you enjoy a nice selection of Exchanges, making new friends and themed quilts with others? Please join the Quilt block exchange. where the fun begins

EMAIL S
NORMA.NJ.STITCHES@GMAIL.COM
LARISSA- LARISSAVEATCH@GMAIL.COM



Dear Guild Administrators,

We would love to invite you and your members to join our group at Facebook group called "Quilt Block Exchange" Our members have an array of block exchanges, project challenges, and skill building videos every month. The good part is we list all swaps for the full year, giving you ample time to decide what interests you the most. Our group is unique because (like no other) we provide many selections and require minimum or maximum blocks for each exchange. Note: we have added an email address below if you have any further questions. Last, we are building a group of like-minded quilters that want to enjoy and help to build our group. If appropriate, can you please post our flyer either at your meetings or in your newsletter. We thank you in advance and look forward to hearing from you and your members soon.

Sincerely,
Administrator: Larissa Veatch= larissaveatch@gmail.com
Administrator: Norma Blackstone= nj.stitches@gmail.com
Administrator: Cailin Jenkins

Aritical

Greetings everybody,

Today I want to talk about a technology that has had a massive impact on the sewing machine landscape: **the stitch regulator**.

What is it? Why would one want/need to use it? What machines are compatible with a stitch regulator?

I will discuss all that and more. I hope you find it interesting.

—Cale

Free-Motion Sewing

The **stitch regulator** is an accessory one would use during **free-motion sewing**.

With **regular sewing**, the direction the fabric is fed is determined by the action of the feed dogs, which feed the fabric forward and backward a designated length each stitch. With **free-motion sewing**, the sewist **disengages the feed dogs** on her machine so that they remain below the needle plate and do not feed the fabric whatsoever. Instead of the feed dogs feeding the fabric forward, the sewist moves the fabric manually with her hands.

The **benefit of free-motion** is that the direction of the fabric is not limited by the ability of the feed dogs. With the feed dogs are disengaged, the user can move the fabric in any direction she wants— forwards, backwards, diagonally, side to side. This technique allows sewists— especially quilters— to create incredible designs and textures on their work that we couldn't otherwise achieve with a typical straight stitch. It allows for a certain level of improvisation and increased creativity while quilting.



Sisters Quilt Show 2012



I have heard this type of quilt described as a “panel” quilt. As you can see, free-motion sewing was done to create texture around the Virgin Mary and the flowers and hummingbird to create texture and definition. (artist: Alethea Ballard)

Challenges of Free Motion

The difficulty of free-motion is that it is a **challenge to achieve consistent stitch length**.

With regular sewing, stitch length is controlled by the gripped feed dog teeth. If we set our stitch length to 2 millimeters, then the feed dogs will feed the fabric 2 millimeters between every stitch. If we set our stitch length to 3.5 millimeters, then the feed dogs will feed the fabric every 3.5 millimeters. And so on.

With free-motion, because we disengage the feed dogs while sewing, stitch length is controlled by the user, not the machine. If I want the stitch length to be 2 millimeters, then I have to manually move the fabric 2 millimeters between stitches. As you can imagine, precision and consistency are difficult.

Because I am an imperfect being, it is impossible for me to consistently move fabric precisely 2 millimeters between every stitch, especially with a machine that sews at a speed of 400-800 stitches per minute. The task becomes even more difficult when I try to do curves and turns on a large swathe of fabric like a quilt, where I am prone to accidentally jerk the fabric and end up with random bouts of 5 millimeter stitch length when I am trying to execute a stitch length closer to 2 millimeters.



In this photograph of free-motion stitching, you can see multiple examples of both inconsistent stitch length and skipped stitches.

On top of that, free-motion is also challenging because we are more susceptible to **flagging**, which increases our chances of skipped stitches.

Sewists don't like skipped stitches. They don't like inconsistent stitch length.

Enter, the stitch regulator.

The Stitch Regulator

A stitch regulator is a device that detects how fast the fabric is being moved underneath the presser foot and then adjusts the speed of the needle going up and down accordingly in order to achieve a consistent stitch length.



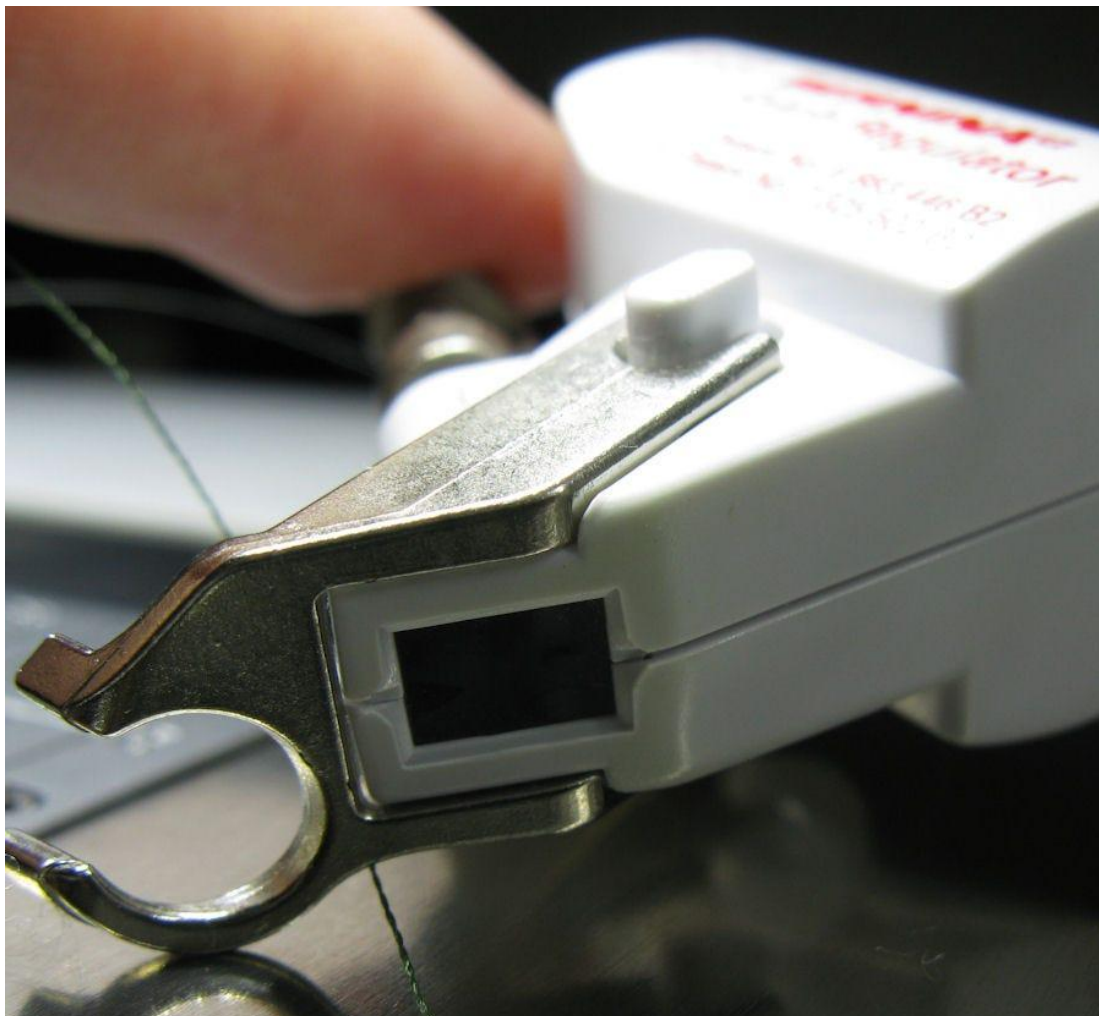
Bernina BSR & Janome ASR

With regular free-motion, in order to achieve consistent stitch length the user must move the fabric at a speed that is proportionate to the speed that the needle is moving up and down. With a stitch regulator you don't need to worry about how fast you move your fabric during free motion, nor do you need to worry about how fast you are running the machine. Put your foot all the way down on the foot pedal— even if it is all the way down, pedal to the metal, the needle will move very slowly.

How does this work?

The sensor of the stitch regulator senses the movement of the fabric, and communicates that speed to the machine. Based on the speed that the fabric is moving (and the desired stitch length and that you select on the machine's screen), the machine will either speed up or slow down. Move the fabric faster, then the needle moves faster. Move it slower and the needle moves slower. Stop moving the fabric and the machine stops sewing.

Note: *If you select a shorter stitch length, the machine will turn over faster than it would if you had selected a longer stitch length; e.g. the frequency between stitches will be longer at 4mm stitch length vs 1mm stitch length.*



Sensor on the underside of a stitch regulator.

While the stitch regulator is an incredibly helpful tool for achieving precise stitch length during free-motion sewing, it is not perfect. If you move the fabric super fast and in a jerky motion, you can still get skipped stitches and inconsistent stitch length. It does not fix the problems one experiences when sewing with a bent needle. It does not overcome poor-quality thread.

In my opinion, in order to achieve the best results possible with a stitch regulator, you ought to sew as if you don't have a stitch regulator. If you get lazy and jerk the fabric around, problems

may still occur. Try your best to move the fabric evenly and at a consistent speed, and the stitch regulator will make up for human error.

What Machines Are Compatible With A Stitch Regulator?

For a long time, Bernina was the only company to offer home sewing machines with stitch regulation capability. If I am not mistaken, the Bernina Aurora 440 was the first machine equipped with BSR (Bernina Stitch Regulator) when it was released about 15-20 years ago. These days, most **Bernina 4-series, 5-series, and 7-series machines** are all compatible with BSR. However, only a few models include the stitch regulator with purchase of a new machine. If the machine doesn't come with a BSR but is compatible with one, then **you can purchase a BSR new** for roughly \$800-1,000.



Bernina's Fascinating Trajectory Over The Past 60 Years

[CALE SCHOENBERG](#) · DECEMBER 12, 2023

[Read full story](#)

Bernina is no longer the only company to offer stitch regulation. Janome now offers their patented ASR (**A**ccurate **S**titch **R**egulator) on three of their machines: the **Continental M17, Continental M8, and Memory Craft 9480**.



You will also see long-arm quilting machines with stitch regulation. Juki makes a relatively cost-effective long-arm machine—the Miyabi J-350—which is designed with **direct-drive technology** and stitch regulation where the sensor is built into the needle plate. Bernina also makes an absolutely beautiful long-arm machine, the Bernina Q-Series (Q-16, Q20, Q24), which is one of the only machines still made in their factory in Switzerland.



Note: Brother and Baby Lock recently released their new top-of-the-line sewing & embroidery combination machines— Brother Aveneer & Baby Lock Radiance—both of which come equipped with stitch regulation.

[New England Quilt Museum](#)

[Click here](#) to discover the upcoming exhibitions and events at the New England Quilt Museum in Lowell, MA:

Selections from the Permanent Collection

On View Through June 21, 2025

In previous centuries, quilts were primarily made to provide warmth on the bed. However, some quilters made special quilts that showed off their fine needlework skills. These special quilts were displayed on the bed only when company visited, and many have survived in good condition. These quilts were treasured by the family and passed down to later generations.

The NEQM is fortunate to have several examples of such quilts in our permanent collection. A selection of these are on view in the Donahue Gallery through June 21, 2025.



WOW



Thank you to all who sent articles and pictures into the Thimble and Friends Newsletter