

## A LETTER FROM ICELAND

Dear all:

August 24, 2008

My name is Vigdis Stefansdottir and I live in Iceland. I belong to the Rotaryclub Reykjavik-Grafarvogur. My club is in one of the newer neighbourhoods of the capital Reykjavik.



Some friends during a garden party in my garden (it can be a bit chilly in Iceland).

In Iceland, the total number of inhabitants is currently 320.000 (yes, thousand, not millions. We have 28 Rotary clubs, most of them mixed gender. There is an active Inner Wheel group in the country as well.

I have been interested in patchwork for about 14 years now and was the initiator and editor for the only quilt magazine published in Iceland, as well as a homepage for patchwork ideas.

Due to other obligations I had to quit that and did so with regrets.

As a Rotarian I have very strong need and wanting for doing good and for several years I have longed for making a Rotary quilt that could raise money for helping children where needed.

When I found the fellowship of Rotary quilters I was thrilled. I instantly realized that quilters, being generous with their time, ideas and love, would be the right people to help me with my dream quilt.



The general idea is to make a large wallhanging – with many blocks. The center would be the rotary emblem with the earth in the middle as to symbolize that Rotary is every where. Around the middle would be blocks (can be pictures on fabric or anything that works) symbolizing big projects that Rotary has taken on worldwide (polio-plus, emergency shelters and boxes, literacy project etc.). Then, there would be a yellow or golden border with embroidered or printed words and sentences that describe the rotary passion of help and friendship along with the four-way test.

Next would come blocks which symbolize district projects – we can each of us select a district to get ideas from. Again, a border with sentences and words would be added, perhaps famous words from the founder or other people.

The last row would have blocks with club/individual projects. The border with the former years themes, finishing with blue, white and yellow borders and a blue edge.

I think that the blocks should be finished 8-9 inches except for the middle one that should be bigger. Also that the quilting itself can be names of clubs world over? or???

This is a massive work and will be a very beautiful quilt. Not only the



Me with a friend from Cardiff (I am the old one ☺).

quilt itself, but also the work showing just what rotary is about: friendship, working together and by that being able to do very big projects.

What do you guys think? Any other ideas? Although this is my idea as shown above, I am very open to suggestions and I know that the brain power is high when comes to designing quilts:)

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Here is a small thing I wrote a long time ago...**Life is – Like a Patchwork**

I sometimes feel that Life is in many ways like a Patchwork Quilt that God is making. Giant patchworks quilt, which we are all part of; where a piece of patchwork from each person connects to all the other pieces to make one big quilt.

The pieces we make are different. Some of the patches are small, some are big. Some are beautiful, made from velvet fabric with gold and silver thread, pattern of roses and violets, while others are dirty, with holes in them, made from cheap fabric, sometimes borrowed or even stolen.

Each part of a persons live is one small part of the patch he or she makes. One part can cover long period or just a single happening. It can be just an instant in time, a unique event that made an impact big enough to make one patch.

Through our life we stitch all the patches together with our steps. Each step we take is one stitch. When we look around, we can see the stitches we have made and also the stitches other people have made.

We can see the small, even stitches, that implicate nice regular life, not many surprises and everything under control. The thread matched the fabric and when the patch was finished, it was done with a small knot and the thread carefully made up.

We can also see the big, uneven stitches where someone was in a hurry and hoped that the quilt would hang together, even though he or see had no time or patience to do it well. Just pushed the needle in and out, regardless of how it came out.

We can see the funny and strange stitches that were made by those who tried all they could to do well but never got the hang of it.

Their stitches go all around the patch, out and about and they sometimes, just sometimes, get it right. The thread is in all colours, none of them really matching the fabric or the stitches.

We can also see broken stitches where life fell apart – where life was not really worth living, but somehow the person managed to pick up the thread again and keep going.

And, we can see stitches made of gold, made of sunshine, made of love, so light and jolly that they just glow and spread kindness and joy.

Those are the stitches made by people when they give of them self selflessly, regardless of any reward.

When God looks down to us, he sees all the patchwork blocks made into one giant quilt. He knows that some of them are in need of repair and that some of them will never be finished. He also knows that there are gaps in between the blocks where the cold wind gets in. Those gaps can often be closed by kindness, by love and understanding between people.

We really should try all we can to make the quilt whole.

*Vigdís Stefánsdóttir 2001*