

BALLOON QUILT DESIGN TIMELINE

The Balloon Quilt has a long history of NMQA Guild members contributing to this group quilt. Whether it is helping to make kits for the balloons, making a balloon or helping with the background, our members look forward to seeing each new design and helping to complete the quilt. We suggest that you have only this one job in the guild during the construction year of August – August.

The Balloon Fiesta Committee has many years of experience helping designers with the Balloon Quilt. Whether it is helping to select balloons, making enlargements, and selecting fabric colors for the kits, helping check out the kits at the NMQA membership meetings, we are always happy to help and pass our knowledge on to the designer.

Supplies:

There are tubs of fabric that travel from one Balloon Quilt Designer to the next designer. These are filled with the solid color fabrics for the balloons as well as landscape and other fabrics for the background of the quilt. These tubs of fabric are passed from one designer to the next during construction of the Quilt Top from August of the design/construction year to August of the quilting year.

Budget:

There are two Line Items in the Guild budget for the quilt. These are 206 for Construction and 207 for the Longarm quilting. The Construction Budget is for anything needed beyond what is included in the tubs for making the quilt. This often includes fabric for the background and backing of the quilt. The Longarm Budget is for payment to the person who does the longarm quilting. The budget is put in place because we are a non-profit and are trying to raise money, these budgets are not to be exceeded.

Timeline for the Quilt:

Keep a record of the number of hours you spend on making the quilt.

March - Call for Design Entries

May - Design Entries Must be submitted by the May Membership Meeting.

June - Winning Design Announced

July – December - Begin work on Quilt

Finalize the design.

Find a Longarm quilter and lock in the date for August of the following year.

Begin work on the background of the quilt.

August – The fabric tubs will be passed to you from the designer completing the top to go to the Longarm quilter.

January - Choosing Balloons:

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The Guild maintains a file of Release Forms that are signed by the owner of the balloon with a photo of their balloon attached. The release form is good for 7 years from the date of the signed release form. The Balloon Fiesta Committee will make them available to you and help make the kits for the balloons at the January committee meeting.

1. For any balloon chosen for the quilt, the release form must still be valid during the year the quilt will be displayed. If not, you have the choice of choosing another balloon, or contacting the owner of the balloon for an updated release form.
2. Things to consider in selecting the balloons. Popular balloons tend to show up often on quilts. Have the balloons been used on a recent quilt? The release form has a list of the year/s the balloon has previously been used. We recommend that a balloon not be used 2 years in a row. A combination of regular balloon shapes and Special shaped balloons must be selected for the quilt.
3. Making the balloons is an intricate process. A size for each balloon chosen must be selected for the quilt. Common finished sizes are 6-inch, 8-inch, 10-inch and-12 inch. The sizes of the balloons coordinate with the complexity of the design of the balloon. A simple design can easily be made as a 6-inch balloon. More complex balloon designs with more colors and pieces should be made as a larger 10 or 12-inch balloon. Balloons can be pieced or appliqued depending on the complexity of the design.
4. When the balloons and sizes have been selected, each photograph of the balloon must be enlarged to the size for that balloon. Then, fabrics are selected that most closely represent the colors of the balloon in the photo provided by the owner of the balloon to make the kits.

January – April - Balloon Kits will be ready for the January Guild meeting for the members to take home and construct the balloons. While the balloons are being made by the members, you can work to complete the background design.

May – July - As the balloons are completed and returned, you can begin laying out where the balloons will be placed on the background.

Backing – Because the quilt moves frequently around the city during the Balloon Quilt year, we recommend that the back be a dark fabric. Balloons are not required on the back of the quilt.

Baskets – Each balloon will need a basket to complete the balloon. The baskets are attached before the quilt goes to the Longarm quilter. Choose the sizes using the enlarged photo of the balloon to coordinate the size of the basket for that balloon. Here are several options that have been used on previous quilts:

Use fabric resembling a basket – several to choose from in the fabric tubs

Embroidered baskets – sometimes are attached during quilting

Beaded baskets – attached after the quilting

July – Preparing instructions for the quilter

Prepare a "quilt map" for the quilter. Draw a rough diagram of the quilt, showing the position of the balloons and any areas that need special attention. Label each balloon or area with a number and then put that number on the photocopy enlargement of that balloon. (These are the enlargements

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that have been returned by the members with the completed balloons.) The quilter will use the copies to plan quilting of gores and shrouds. For special areas write or draw instructions for the quilter.

August 1st – Deliver completed Top with Backing and the ‘Quilt Map’ to the Longarm quilter.

August – Prepare Label, Binding and Hanging sleeve

While the top is being quilted prepare the label for the back of the quilt. If you do not have access for lettering or embroidery with your machine to create a label, there are resources available through the guild and the Balloon Fiesta Committee.

Label information should include:

Name of the Quilt and Quilt year

Made in New Mexico by the New Mexico Quilters Association

Numbers of hours – includes yours and the hours that come in from the members who make the balloons as well as the quilter’s hours and any other hours needed to complete the quilt.

Designer

Quilter

Guild members who worked on the quilt – construction of the quilt and the balloons

Optional – Names of the balloons and who constructed each balloon

Hanging Sleeve – The hanging sleeve should be 8 inches x the width of the quilt.

Fabric Tubs – Organize the tubs of fabric and arrange to give them to the designer who will be constructing the Balloon Quilt for the year following this design.

September – October - Complete Quilt

Apply any embellishments to the quilt, complete and attach the Binding, Hanging Sleeve and Label. The Hanging Sleeve should be sewn into the binding of the quilt for stability and strength.

November 1st – Give the completed quilt to a photographer for the official guild photo of the quilt.

This photo will be used in all publicity for the quilt including Raffle Tickets, NMQA Website, Post cards and other items that are approved for that quilt year. When the photograph is ready, give a copy to the Raffle Ticket Chair so that the Raffle tickets can be ordered in November.

Prepare a quilt map for the winner of the quilt. Use an 8x10 photo of the quilt (supplied by the photographer) and number each balloon with a photo marking pen. Attach a list of numbers and names of corresponding balloons, along with the guild member who constructed the balloon.

January, Quilt Year – Reveal the quilt at the January Guild Meeting

The Balloon Fiesta Committee with the help of the Raffle Ticket Chair takes over the custodial duties of the quilt. Beginning in January, Raffle Tickets will be available at the monthly meetings for members to check out and sell to friends and family.

January – September, Quilt Year – The quilt will be present at each Guild meeting.

After the January membership meeting, the quilt will begin moving to the various Quilt Stores in and around Albuquerque, the AAAA – the Albuquerque balloon Association, the Neighborhood Art

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Show and other opportunities to sell Raffle Tickets and to create publicity for the Balloon Quilt and the guild. We suggest that as the designer of the current quilt, you make yourself available to attend some of these events. Our customers love meeting the designer of the Quilt. It is a real delight to talk to our customers and tell them about the design. After the September Membership meeting the quilt will no longer travel and will be ready for the Balloon Fiesta in October.

September –Quilt Year - State Fair – Each year the Balloon Quilt is entered in the New Mexico State Fair. The designer fills out the entry for the quilt and makes sure that it is delivered to the appropriate person. After the Fair is over, the Designer picks up the quilt or makes arrangements with a guild member to pick up the quilt. As the Quilting categories have changed, contact our NMQA State Fair representative for up-to-date information. You can also get information from the State Fair website.

October Quilt Year – Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

Set-Up for the booth at AIBF is done on the Tuesday before Balloon Fiesta starts. The quilt will be displayed in the booth during the 9 days of this international event. We ask that you work multiple shifts at the Balloon Fiesta because our customers love meeting the designer of the Quilt. We will sell as many Raffle tickets as possible and on the last day of the Balloon Fiesta, a ticket will be drawn to choose the winner of the quilt. You especially need to work the booth on the last day – the second Sunday for the drawing of the winning ticket.

Delivering the Quilt to the Winner -

At the end of the Balloon Fiesta, the Designer will take the quilt home to clean and do any repairs needed. If the winner is local, you will help present the quilt to the winner at the NMQA October guild meeting. If the winner lives further away, out of state or international, the quilt will be boxed and mailed to the winner by the Balloon Fiesta Committee with a letter from the guild President.