

Better Homes and Gardens AMERICAN PATCHWORK & QUILTING

FOR RELEASE AFTER MAY 13, 2011

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Local Quilt Shop Featured in Better Homes and Gardens® Quilt Sampler® Magazine

DES MOINES, IA – Prairie Stitches Quilt Shoppe, a quilt shop in Oswego, IL, has been chosen as one of the 11 featured shops across the United States for the Fall 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 Erbe Keltner, group editor of *American Patchwork & Quilting*® magazine, narrows down the applications to 10 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 are eligible to apply for this year's honor. Prairie Stitches Quilt Shoppe and the other 10 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 will be available on newsstands on September 6, 2011. 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 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 almost twelve years.

The other 10 shops featured in the Fall 2011 *Quilt Sampler* include: Country Fabrics and Quilting in Brainerd, MN; Elaine's Quilt Block in Cottonwood Heights, UT; Happiness is... Quilting! in McKinney, TX; Island Quilter in Vashon, WA; Millstone Quilts in Mechanicsville, VA; Quilt Lovers' Hangout in North Fort Myers, FL; Quilter's Station in Lee's Summit, MO; The Running Stitch in Kanata, Ontario, Canada; Thistle Bee Quilt Shoppe in Goldsboro, NC and Vintage Threads Quilt Shoppe in Dyersville, IA.

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

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