Even with its blue colors, quilters call this “red work” and refer to the white borders as “sashing.” Eight of the nine blocks have embroidered patterns associated with celestial navigation. The remaining block contains an inset printed photograph. The three blocks at the upper left show projection on the plane of meridian diagrams that are copied from my N folder. These depict approximate geometrical solutions of navigational triangles for sights on Altair, Saturn, and the Sun. The blocks on the diagonal are constant latitude scale small area plots. These determine fixes and an estimated position.

The remaining two embroidered blocks depict the constellations Orion and the Summer Triangle. First magnitude stars are shown with solid centers and long rays, while those of second magnitude have shorter rays. Third magnitude bodies rate no more than large French knots.

Designing and creating a new quilt pattern is always fun, but basing a quilt on the contents of my sight folder from a USPS course had its own special excitement. It gave me a chance to review navigational concepts and allowed me to bring ideas about sailing to a new audience. Discussing the content of this project with other quilters is a fascinating experience. Suffice it to say that most serious quilters are not particularly familiar with sextants, spherical triangles, and celestial navigation.

Returning to sailing, we expanded our horizons with bare boat charters to Santa Catalina Island, the British Virgin Islands, the San Juan Islands, San Francisco Bay, Lake Superior, the French Society Islands, the French Riviera, Bar Harbor, St. Martin, Martinique, and the Whitsunday Islands in Australia.

This has provided interesting sailing stories and an appreciation for the value of our USPS training. Bear in mind that charter boaters are always, “sailing a boat with which they are completely unfamiliar, in waters where they have never been before, guided by charts written in languages that they may not be able to read.”

Richard’s documentation of earlier trips with 35 mm photography led to presentations at squadron meetings.
Quilting and Video, page 2

and District 28 conferences. We increased our other USPS activities, with each of us serving two terms as squadron commander. Then, in 2001, along came digital video. That tale belongs to Richard.

**Compact mini-DV cameras now produce video of amazing quality.** Realizing this potential in finished presentations requires shooting large amounts of raw footage, followed by absolutely ruthless editing. We record 4-5 hours of video during a one week charter and bring home suitable background music, as well as charts and guides. All of this is downloaded into a computer for editing.

I select and trim video clips, adjust image properties, add transitions, and insert voice narration. The result is a finished video of 40-45 minutes. This can be described as a labor intensive process that has completely solved the problem of what to do with my spare time! On the off chance that we encounter someone who does not wish to spend three-quarters of an hour learning about our cruise, I also create 10 minute video samplers. Our programs are then recorded as full quality video DVD’s that can be viewed on any standard DVD player or projected up to an 8 foot width.

If your internet connection supports 256 Kbps, you can see steaming video versions of the samplers by visiting our web site.

http://math.arizona.edu/~rbt/ACTIVITY/activity.htm

These, of course, are of much lower quality than the DVD versions.

Shari and I both serve as videographers and narrators. Remember, there are only two of us on board a boat. If you see one of us in the picture, then the other one is doing the taping. How good is your coordination? Try steering an outboard dinghy motor with one hand and making video with the other!

Video intensifies boating experiences and prolongs the pleasure that they give us. Being 58 and 64 year old grandparents with full time jobs, our time on the water is severely limited. Shooting video as we travel focuses our attention on all aspects of sailing. Editing presentations and scanning other material lets us relive trips and solidifies them in our minds. Our videos also allow us to look back at our cruises. Fully narrated and tightly edited DVD’s are as close as we can come to a return visit. On the quilting front, Shari often brings home fresh ideas and new quilting techniques that she has encountered in foreign ports.

Video has also expanded our Power Squadrons activity. We gave presentations at our own District 28 Fall conference in 2002 and at the upstate New York District 6 Fall Conference in 2003.

How might quilting, video, or any other hobbies and interests, expand the horizons of USPS members? Encouraging links to external activities and including them in programs could be a powerful force for member involvement and retention. Interesting videos of squadron rendezvous and other events would be excellent for public relations, hospitality rooms, and membership recruitment.

We enjoy our activities and hope that they will serve as catalysts, encouraging other USPS members to look for connections between their interests and passions. Go sailing and have fun!