

## Educational Tidbit for October 2021

### SOME SOLUTIONS TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF FRAYING FABRIC

As of September 22<sup>nd</sup>, autumn is here, happy October! Traditionally, autumn brings the celebration of the bountiful harvest, colorful leaves on deciduous trees, and cooler weather. In California we don't get those obvious signs of the change from summer to autumn. Here autumn means it's pumpkin time. We can finally purchase all things pumpkin, including: farm grown pumpkins, pumpkin bread, pumpkin pancakes, and pumpkin spiced latte. However, I celebrate the beautiful seasonal orange squash, that is pumpkin, by eating Costco pumpkin pie, yum!

This month's tidbit deals with fraying fabric. It is so disappointing when cutting into a quality piece of fabric, and it becomes like an uncoiled spring with threads splaying in all directions. When fraying has happened in the past, the best I could do was trim those threads off or use pinking shears. Now I use a pre-emptive method by cutting a small piece of the fabric to check for fraying before cutting out the entire pattern. If the fabric frays over much, I use a "La Camilla" rotary cutter to cut out the pieces for my quilt. The La Camilla features a blade that cuts fabric in a scallop pattern which defers fraying.



Pinking shears are still available when necessary.



Best Press used to crisp up the fabric before cutting can hold fraying at bay to some extent.

There are some liquid products you can apply to your fabric to defer fraying, but I have avoided those. Most say something like “use in a well ventilated area”. That does not appeal to me at all. I do not want to inhale some unknown chemical simply to stop my fabric from fraying.

To illustrate the La Camilla scallop cut and pinking shears combo, I will show you two quilt tops made from the same red and white fabric line. The first from a kit, the second from a jelly roll.

The following picture shows the “Ruby Red” kit quilt top in the fabric line “So Ruby”. When I pulled the kit out of the cupboard, I was looking forward to making the quilt top and thought the kit instructions would tell me all I needed to know. Boy, was I surprised! The kit instructions told me how to cut out the fabric, but when it came to sewing, it simply said to sew the pieces together as shown in the picture. After several trial and error sewing steps, the quilt top finally looks like the kit picture. This trial and error process did little to ease the fraying problems I encountered. Each time I would handle the fabric or use the seam ripper, more fraying occurred.





As nice as this quilt top looks, you would never know that lurking underneath on the reverse side, behind the beautiful quilt top façade, lies fraying fabric! Threads are popping out all along the sashing.





When I pulled out the Ruby Red kit from the cupboard, I discovered I had also purchased a jelly roll and some fabric for borders, in the same “So Ruby” fabric line, to make a Card Trick quilt. Other than cutting the jelly roll and the borders, I had not cut out the background fabric for this second red and white quilt. I decided to use my anti-fraying techniques to sew the second quilt top and then compare the results of this quilt top to the “Ruby Red” quilt top.

Here is a picture of the finished “Card Trick” quilt top before final pressing:



When you turn it over you get this nice clean reverse side. There is a small amount of fraying on pieces I had previously cut with the regular rotary blade. All in all, the La Camilla with the scallop cutting blade and the pinking shears really do the trick to defer fraying. I used the scallop blade to cut out all the white pieces, and to square up the blocks. Next, I used pinking shears when trimming edges and making half square triangles.



Hope to be back with a tidbit in November. Please contact me at my email address listed in the members roster if you have any comments on this tidbit or if you have any ideas for future tidbits. I will research and report on topics you want to see discussed in a future tidbit. Have a happy October! Now, I must go to eat that Costco pumpkin pie.