



Deb Heatherly, Featured Instructor, Franklin, NC

Bio: Deb Heatherly is a former freelance writer and designer for Quilt magazine and has been quilting for 43 years. Her first introduction to sewing was at age 3 when her mother, an accomplished seamstress, and former fabric shop owner, stacked Sears Roebuck catalogs under the machine's foot pedal so that she could reach it. Deb soon learned to make doll clothes and eventually her own clothes, proudly wearing one of her creations on her first day in high school.

Although no one in her family had ever quilted, in 1982 she took the plunge and has not stopped since. Originally from Charleston, SC, Deb has called the beautiful mountains of Franklin NC her home for the past 23 years.

Upon moving to Franklin, Deb opened a quilt shop named "Deb's Cats N Quilts." The shop got its name from an article that she wrote for QUILT magazine entitled "All I know about quilting I learned from my cats." The article had such a huge response that it was inevitable that her shop would play upon that theme. Samples and vignettes throughout shop left no doubt that she is truly a lover of both cats and quilts.

The shop was honored to be featured in SAMPLER magazine in 2016 and although she loved being a shop owner, Deb sold the shop soon after that article so that she could design for Creative Grids® full time. The shop was renamed when it was sold and Deb still publishes under the name Deb's Cats N Quilts. She also has a website: www.debscatsnquilts.com.

To date she has designed 8 specialty tools for Creative Grids®, The Cat's Cradle and Cats Cradle XL, The Strippy Stars Tool, Turbo 4-Patch, The Ultimate Flying Geese Tool, The Kitty Cornered Tool, The Half Rectangle Trim Tool, and The Hunter's Stars Trim Tool, with a new release coming in the spring of 2026. She is also the author of 8 books and hundreds of patterns that use these tools. Her greatest joy comes from developing techniques and tools that help even a beginner have success.

Deb is the originator of an online Facebook group called 'Grids Girls' which had over 15,500 members from all over the world. She designs two special mystery quilts for the group each year that are highly anticipated by the group members.

Deb is married to her husband Phil and they currently have 5 spoiled kitties: Max, Monroe, Timmy, Little, and Loo Loo. She has one daughter and a grandson. She also has a sister who has discovered quilting recently and is already creating amazing quilts.

Deb is now limiting her travel schedule, (to spend more time with her husband and the furry kids), but still hosts 2 annual retreat in addition to teaching monthly zoom classes. Her August "zoom week" class is always popular, and this year, an all-day New Years Day zoom mystery was attended by students in 18 states and was a great way to start the year.

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