

## Tips For Creating Hanging Banners

### Planning

Size and shape – Before beginning, plan what you want to put on the banner so it is large enough so you will see it. This may help determine your banner size. You can use brown wrapping paper and make it the size of the proposed banner and from there design the lodge banner. You can tap it on the wall so you can see how it would look and help determine the size of the letters and objects.

The size of most banners can be adapted by using a grid (squares where you blow up or reduce a design). Maximum size is 3 feet wide by 6 feet long and the smallest size is 2 feet by 3 ½-4 feet.

Background of the banner – Use subtle, light colored fabrics. Use of drapery fabric for the background of the banner is great. This needs to be selected first and will determine what colors would be readable from a distance. It is extremely important that the background be perfectly squared. It will show from a distance if the two sides are off as little as a ½ inch.

Use of the following can increase the size of the banner. Be careful not to take away from the lodge design. Usually simple designs and layout are better, bolder and more pleasing to the viewer.

Optional Borders will add to the size of the banner. Borders are used not only to finish the edges, but to enhance the design. Most banner are fairly large, so you don't want a wide boarder that will overpower the center theme. If the boarder is pieces, make the pieces in a larger than normal quilt size. Piecing looks much smaller from a distance and you can easily loose the beauty of it when it is too small.

Optional Corner Squares – Sometimes the use of corner squares helps a design and may be essential. If a printed fabric is used for the border, it may make it impossible to match the print design on the corners, so corner squares work great. An unmatched design really shows up from a distance.

Optional Narrow inside black border – A narrow ½" inside border can frame a design nicely, especially when black lettering is used.

### Creating the banner:

Heat'n'Bond Lite is ironed on the back of your fabric pieces is a great 'glue' to hold down the pieces before you stitch them down. This is ironed on the fabric back before the pieces are cut out while you are designing on that piece. Because of the glue nature, there are no fraying

edges, and it adds body to the banner, allowing it to hang straighter on the wall. It is a simple and successful technique. [The individual pieces are considered to be applique pieces.]

Appliques – If there is an applique that needs to be moved or changed after it has been adhered to the banner fabric, simply re-heat the piece and peel it off. Take a piece of plain fabric and iron over the area to finish removing any left-over glue (so you don't get the glue on your iron).

Cutting Letters or Numbers – There really is an art to cutting out smooth letters, versus short choppy edges, especially on curves. Open the scissors fully, begin cutting, slowly and smoothly, utilizing the full length of the blade, until you reach the end of scissor points. This gives you a long, continuous cut.

Cutting Small Areas – It is easier if you cut the inside of the letters (a, e, o, b, d, g, etc.) and curves first, then the top edges, finishing with the bottom edges which have less turns and curves.

Letter Placement – Lay out items on the banner fabric and step back to view the placement. Tip from internet – To place the letters in straight lines, and centering them evenly makes the difference of looking amateur or professional. Use a sliver of soap, or wash-out marking pen, draw a vertical line down the center of the area where the letters will be placed. Now draw horizontal lines, each the exact distance apart. Use these lines to place and adhere your letters. Simply use a wet washcloth to dab away the placement lines.

Optional Borders First – Whenever possible, cut the background fabric and apply the borders before adding the appliques. It helps keep the size consistent and makes it much easier to handle. Appliques make the banner top 'stiff' and they can loosen in handling. The exception is if your design goes into the border seam allowance. You will want to put only those applique pieces on, then the borders before you finish the applique work.

Do not use Stretch Fabrics because they move and shift.

Sewing Machine Walking Foot – A 'Walking Foot' for your machine may help in stitching down you banner items and may prevent the items from slipping and shifting.

Features – There are several different ways to bring out features that cannot be made out of fabric, including hand embroidery, permanent ink marker, blush powders, buttons, etc. Sometimes we just have to think outside of the box! Be sure to take into consideration how you might clean the banner later.

Photos – There is a photo-transfer product where a photo can be printed on pre-treated fabric and then use it as any other fabric in the banner. This product can be found in Craft, Fabric and Quilt stores as well as the internet. This can be printed on the home computer. It is helpful to first print the picture on paper and review it before printing on the treated fabric.

Patience – It takes time and patience to make a professional looking wall hanging. If your original fabric choice doesn't look good, be willing to re-do it...regardless of time and/or cost. Don't settle for less than the best...a lot of people will be looking at the banner and analyzing your work for years to come.

Stitching down your items – Use a straight or zig-zag stitch around all the edges to permanently adhere your items to banner backing fabric. Take your time and make sure you have a large area to lay out the banner.

## **Tips**

Stitch all layers at one time. With the use of Heat'N'Bond, there is no need to stitch anything down prior to stitching down other banner items. If you add borders, the borders will need to be stitched to keep the banner edges from 'waving'.

Two Dowel Rod Pockets – Top and bottom of the banner.

These two fabric pockets will go across the width of the fabric and should be 3 – 4 inches wide.

Use 1 inch diameter wood dowel rods. The top dowel rod will be the length corresponding to the width of the banner. The bottom dowel rod will be 1-2 inches shorter so the pocket ends will be able to be stitched closed without pulling on the banner fabric.

Leave the pocket ends open so the dowel rod for the top and a dowel rod for weight in the bottom pocket can be inserted. The top pocket will have a 1 inch diameter wood dowel rod that has an eye-screw in the center on each end. It is through these eyes you will attach your cord to hang the banner. The bottom pocket can be hand stitched closed on each side (with the 1 inch diameter dowel rod inside). This helps the banner hang straighter and eliminates 'waves' along the side edges.

## **Storage Ideas**

You can create a 'pillow case' type of sack to put the rolled up banner inside for storage. Vary which way the banner is rolled to reduce permanent fabric lines.

Or for Rolling – Banners may need to be rolled to be put in a closet, due to storage constraints. This is adequate, however, they will come out with some permanent wrinkles. If need to roll the banner, be sure to roll the banner with a sheet around it for protection from light, dust, etc.

Dry Cleaning – Do Not Dry Clean the banners. Air out the banners if necessary it can be vacuumed.