

This is my Row by Row experience:

I heard about The Row by Row Experience for the first time last summer but I was so busy sewing for my expected twin granddaughters that I couldn't possibly squeeze in another thing. I vowed that I would "clear" as many things as possible and attempt the 2016 Challenge. My Row by Row quilt was planned as a summer quilting expedition in conjunction with some family visits, a major family event and even a special cross country dog adventure. I wanted to weave the highway between the rows, include rows from places we would visit and actually have the quilt depict the entire journey. I started with 2 shops near my home in Monument, Colorado. First, Sew Motion in Palmer Lake captured the essence of Palmer Lake perfectly so I knew I had to have their row. Also, one of my favorite places for years has been Na-La's Quilt Shoppe in Fountain, Colorado and when I saw their 2016 Row with the stack of quirky houses, I was hooked. My husband and I then went to visit our son in Montana and "borrow" the grand-dog, Zeus, for a summer adventure. I collected the next row from Big Sky Quilts in Great Falls, Montana and was touched by their tribute to "Greenlight a Vet" with the green light on the porch door in their pattern. Our next trip took us to Scottsdale, AZ to check on our condo and then on to San Diego, CA for a 3-day doggie centered vacation in Ocean Beach. Before leaving I browsed through the States' Row by Row Facebook pages to see what I might collect on my way. With portable sewing machine, yards of fusible backing and minimal tools, we set out. In Phoenix, Arizona I collected 35th Ave Sew & Vac's portrayal of a classic AZ desert scene. In San Diego, Beverly Fabrics' row captured 3 icons of the area: Point Loma Lighthouse, Coronado Bridge and the Coronado Hotel. Returning to Colorado, we would travel through New Mexico and having browsed the Facebook page I set my sights on the row from Sew Easy in Roswell, New Mexico. It added 3 additional hours to the trip home but I managed to convince my husband that this was essential to my row by row and a must for Zeus' 2016 Coast to Coast Adventure. Even Zeus managed a pose for us in Roswell (See Facebook page for Zeus, The CoPilot).

The final part of my Row by Row Journey brought us east to Delaware for my Father-in-law's 90th Birthday celebration. I was raised in Maryland, my husband in Delaware so these states needed to be represented in my quilt. I loved the Crab Feast row from the Quilt Vine in Trappe, Maryland and made a visit to get their pattern. With so much family in Delaware, I was excited to see the Sand Castle home on the row from Mare's Bears in Lewes, Delaware. I love this shop and visit every time I'm in the area, so finishing my row by row here in Delaware meant that I could bring my quilt here to complete my journey and share it with them as well.

-Karen D'Amour