

# A Bee – u – ti – ful Gift

By Leanne Cordischi

Clearing a home after someone you love has passed is painful.

Sifting through items to keep, toss or donate is an arduous task. It can bring you to tears and lead you to smiles.

Last year I was tasked to clear out my parents' home. In an effort to get the house on the market quickly and to move my dad into his independent apartment, I feverishly sorted through boxes in the eaves, closets in the basement and all the rooms in-between. In my search and sort, I came across a bag tucked in the back of my mother's sewing table. As I opened the bag, I found familiar squares from a quilt my mother had started years ago. Under the squares I discovered the remnants of tracing paper and the hand drawn sketches that my mom had created of cats in various playful positions. Each quilted square had one of the cat versions embroidered with royal blue thread – mom's favorite color.

This bittersweet find left me in tears and smiles. Life, commitments and the theft of Alzheimer's made its so my mom never completed the quilt. I traced the lines of each of the cats and found my mom in every stitch.

I knew I did not have the skill set to complete the quilt and my heart could not let the squares hit the trash pile. I started to think about who would appreciate the craftsmanship and time my mom had poured into each of the squares and I thought of the Brookline Bees, a Senior Center quilting group.

With a phone call to Julie Washburn and a drop off at the Brookline Senior Center, the squares found a new home.

A year later I received an unexpected email and a picture from Julie asking if I was the one who had donated some quilted squares months ago. I quickly clicked on the attached picture and the tears and smiles came flooding back. The Brookline Bees had magically taken the bag of unfinished squares and turned them into the quilt my mom had envisioned. Looking at the finished quilt I saw my mom in each and every square and in the beautiful royal blue flowered fabric the Bees had chosen to frame the quilt, which made me think of my mom and her beautiful garden.

I can never thank Joyce and her Bees enough for the memories they have restored. Their collective stitches have mended a piece of my broken heart.

The Bees have graciously worked with me to make it so the quilt has now found a forever place in my home, for me, my three girls and for someday grandchildren. Every time I use it, I will think of my mom, the Bees, and this treasured gift and I will smile.

*The Brookline Bees are a quilting group/sewing club at the Brookline Senior Center. They offer a variety of activities, including: quilting & sewing classes, quilt composition consultations, quilt customization, and mending workshops. The Brookline Bees meet on Tuesdays from 10:30 AM to noon and always welcome new members to start a project or restart an old one. They welcome donations of fabric, notions and sewing machines less than 10 years old. Email questions about the group or a project you think might "Bee" something they might like to [brooklinebeehive@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinebeehive@gmail.com) or stop by any Tuesday!*