**Tote Bag Pattern for**

**Ashland County Cancer Association**

by Gail Warnes

This pattern is a suggestion. It is how I make these totes. You can adjust or change the pattern any way you like. I use upholstery or drapery fabric that usually comes 52 inches wide. The lowest price I have found for this fabric is at Norwalk Fabric Outlet, 32 West Main Street, Norwalk, Ohio. The fabric is usually around $8.00 a yard. You could also use denim or duck cloth, anything that is heavy duty. Regular quilt weight cotton would probably be too light weight to carry a quilt, a bottle of water, a magazine or a book, etc. If you use quilt weight fabric it will need to be lined.

You will need 1 ¼ yard if 52 inch wide fabric or 1 ½ yards of 44 inch wide fabric.

1. From the 52 in wide fabric cut a piece 24 inches width of fabric. If the fabric is directional you would want to cut two pieces vertically on the fabric 24 inches wide and 24.5 inches long. This is the body of the bag.

1. a. From the 44 inch wide fabric cut a piece on the straight of the grain that is 48 inches long and 24 inches wide.

2. Cut two pieces 4 inches wide and WOF. These will be the handles.

2. a. From the 44 inch wide fabric cut two pieces on the straight of the grain that are 48 inches long and 4 inches wide.

3. Cut one piece of fabric 12x13 inches for a pocket.

4. Zigzag around all edges of the body of the bag and the pocket to keep them from fraying.

5. Press the 4 inch WOF pieces in half. Open the fabric and press each side to the center fold. Then fold the fabric in half again. You should have two straps 1 inch wide and 52 inches long. Top stitch down each side of the strap.

6. Press up ½ inch on all sides of the pocket fabric. Then press the top down an additional 1 inch. Top stitch the top hem down. The pocket should now be around 11 inches square. Any size pocket will do.

7. Fold the body of the bag in half to make a 24 inch square. Center the pocket on one side of the body. Unfold the bag body and stitch the pocket down on one side. I put it on the outside and stitch around the three sides twice to strengthen the seam.

8. Fold the body of the bag in half, right sides together. Stitch the sides together. Press the seams open. To make a flat bottom to the bag lay the end of the seam against the center of the bottom of the bag. Measure up 2 inches from the end of the seam and mark it. Then stitch across the triangle going through the 2 inch mark. The seam will be 4 inches from side to side. Repeat this on the other seam of the bag. Press the triangles at the bottom of each side seam up against the side seam. Stitch in place.

9. Turn the bag right side out. Press the top edge down ½ inch. Then press the top down another inch. Top stitch this top hem down. I also stitch ¼ inch from the top of the bag too.

10. Get a handle and place the ends on the side of the pocket. I usually have the ends about in the middle of the each side of the pocket. Stitch from the bottom of the handle to the top edge of the bag; stitch across the handle at the top of the bag and go back across it three times to strengthen it, then stitch down the other side of that end of the strap and stitch across the bottom a couple of times. Repeat for the other end of the strap on the other side of the pocket.

11. Feel through the bag to place the other strap ends on the back of the bag in the same place as the strap on the front of the bag. Stitch them down the same way the front strap was stitched down.

Feel free to use decorative stitches for any of the top stitching. You could decorate the pocket with rickrack or other trim. I have only used floral fabric when it was given to me from someone who had left over fabric from a project. Usually I try to use geometric fabrics, plaids, or solids so men would also feel comfortable carrying it.

Again this pattern is simply a suggestion. Any bag you create will be appreciated. It just needs to be sturdy and be large enough to hold one of the donation quilts. Have fun!