

Eagle pattern gives 30th barn quilt unique look

When Jim Leuenberger decided to start a barn quilt project in Shawano County, his criteria included staying mainly with traditional quilt patterns.

“There are so many beautiful quilt patterns that I really didn’t see the need to do any that were really unusual,” Leuenberger said.

But last December during a holiday visit to Iowa, Leuenberger saw a poster promoting an art event that he immediately thought would make a great barn quilt. The design was of a multi-colored bald eagle in flight.

“I really liked everything about it except the head,” he said. “So I brought back a copy of the poster, hoping to convince someone to put a similarly painted quilt on their barn.”

Jay and Kathy Pieper at Stone Fence Farm, W10012 County A, Shawano, were happy to use the design.

The original 160-acre Pieper farm was purchased by Jay’s grandparents, Alma and Walter Pieper, in 1926. They built the barn in 1932 and used it for their dairy herd. Jay grew up on the farm and he and Kathy bought the farm in 1985 with 20 acres. The remainder of the farm is still in the family as well.

The eagle painting, “Freedom,” took shape with the help of Becky Krubsack. “She helped us lay out the pattern and did a beautiful job of painting the eagle’s head,” Leuenberger said. “It looks like a real eagle.”

The quilt was sponsored by Tim and Barb Schmid of Shawano and is the county’s 30th. Jay Pieper said they really like the barn quilt pattern because it promotes Wisconsin agriculture. “As an Army veteran, I really like the eagle pattern because it represents freedom,” he said.