

75th Shawano Barn Quilt is Surprise Anniversary Gift

On November 11, Jim and Jayne Radtke, W13564 Burma Road, Marion, will celebrate their 22nd wedding anniversary. As a surprise anniversary gift, Jayne's sister, Patti White, and her friend, Dean Bezek, decided to sponsor a barn quilt for them. So they contacted Shawano County's barn quilt project coordinator Jim Leuenberger to make an appointment with him to pick out a pattern.

The pattern they selected is called "Star of Empire," which now is on display on a barn on the farm that has been in the Radtke family since 1879. The 75th barn quilt now on display in Shawano County was put up by Bruce Teetzen and Keith Raddant of Raddant Electric in Shawano.

Jim's grandfather, William, actually purchased the farm, then totaling 120 acres, on December 16, 1879 for \$450. The barn was built in 1901. It was then sold to Jim's dad, Ernst, on May 9, 1933, and Jim then bought it from him in 1979. The farm was always operated as dairy farm with a herd of Holsteins.

After just over 30 years of milking cows, Jim and Jayne decided to sell their 55-cow milking herd on December 15, 2010. They were sold at the Great Northern Land and Cattle Company in Fond du Lac. At the sale were Dean Bezek and Richard Jordan, dairymen from Idaho, who were looking for cattle and a barn to rent to milk them in. They had cattle of their own and bought some of the Radtke cows, and made an agreement with Jim and Jayne to rent their barn.

On December 16, Bezek, and Jordan, Bart-Crest Holsteins, started milking cows on the Radtke farm. The Radtkes continue to raise crops on the farm, which now totals over 300 acres of owned and rented land.