

Attendees to Sunday's Dairy Brunch on the Farm will see County's 139th Barn Quilt

People who attend Shawano County's annual Brunch on the Farm will not only see one of Shawano County's most modern dairy operations and get a great meal, but they will also get to see Shawano County's 139th barn quilt. It is on a barn at Schmidt Ponderosa, W3773 Old Dump Road just south of Bonduel. The pattern the Schmidts selected for their quilt is called "St. Paul," which Paul, who owns and operates the farm with his wife Renee and their six children, said is "just a coincidence."

The Schmidt quilt was sponsored by Shawano State Farm Insurance agent Idell Johnston. "As a member of the Shawano community, I feel it is very important to help and be involved," Johnston said. "I have always encouraged my children to be involved as well. When I was approached about sponsoring a quilt, there was no doubt I'd help in any way I could. This was something my husband and sons are very excited about too. It all goes hand in hand with being a good neighbor, which is what State Farm is all about."

The original owners of the Schmidt farm were August and Emma Boerst, who milked cows until 1944. That year, they sold it to their daughter and son-in-law William and Esther Schmidt, who milked cows there until 1957. They sold the farm to August and Louise Schmidt in January 1957, who raised heifers in the barn until 1998. That year, Louise sold the farm to Paul and Renee Schmidt, who continued to use the barn the quilt is displayed on for housing their prefresh cows until 2008. Currently the barn is used for raising steers. August and Louise Schmidt hosted Shawano County's first brunch on the farm in 1984.

Today, 12 Schmidt family members and 17 employees run the dairy. The milking herd totals 1,200 Holstein cows that are milked three times a day in a double-18 parlor. The parlor was expanded from a double-12 in 2011 to more efficiently milk the herd. A liquid waste storage lagoon was also added along with a manure composter. The farm totals 1600 acres of cropland.

"Driving around Shawano County, we have enjoyed seeing the way the barn quilts have brightened the countryside," Johnston said. "It is a wonderful project that has piqued the interest of residents and tourists alike. Many have come to Shawano to follow maps and see the different quilts. It is a wonderful project for the entire Shawano community and I am proud to be a sponsor."

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