

Homeward Star is County's 167th Barn Quilt

Gary Tauchen has sponsored Shawano County's 167th barn quilt that is now displayed on his family's farm, Tauchen Harmony Valley Dairy at N3399 Broadway Road, Bonduel. It is the Tauchens' second barn quilt and the county's 167th. The quilt pattern they selected is called Homeward Star and it was painted by the Shawano County barn quilt committee.

"Barn quilts have become a theme in Shawano Country," Gary Tauchen said. "It is great to see so much cooperation, promotion of culture, and community involvement in this project.

"We appreciate the efforts of so many people involved in this endeavor," Tauchen continued. "Jim and Irene Leuenberger's visits to states like Iowa and Kentucky where they have similar projects was the inspiration for the Shawano County project. And now SPOKES is developing bicycle routes to view these artistic quilts and promote healthy lifestyles in the community.

"Agriculture is a \$60.2 billion industry in Wisconsin," Tauchen said. "The barn quilt project effort not only promotes agriculture, but tourism as well. This investment will benefit Shawano County in many ways. Tauchen Harmony Valley, Inc. is proud to participate in an effort to make our community attractive and unique."

Herb and Marlys Tauchen purchased a 180 acre farm from Louis Brunner in 1976 and started a dairy herd with about 40 Holstein cows. They incorporated in 1979 with sons Gary and Alan. By 1990 the herd had grown to 120 cows. When son Stephen decided to return to the farm, they realized they would need to add more cows to support four families. So they built a new free stall barn with a milking parlor and increased the herd to 500 cows.

When their fourth son, Greg, also decided to return to the farm, another free stall barn was added and the herd increased to 1000 cows.

Today, the Tauchens own 1400 acres of cropland and rent another 1050. They milk 1050 cows and have 850 head of young stock.

Herb and Marlys, who recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary, said they are happy to be part of the Shawano County barn quilt project. "It really is something special for our area," Marlys said. The Tauchen quilt was put on display by LeRoy Raddant and Bruce Teetzen of Raddant Electric in Shawano.

Anyone who would like to participate in Shawano County's barn quilt project can contact project coordinator Jim Leuenberger at 715-524-5685 or by email at jamesmleuenberger@yahoo.com. You can also contact Patti Peterson, tourism manager at the Shawano Country Chamber of Commerce at 715-524-2139 or tourism@shawano.com. A link on the Shawano Chamber Web site includes photos and information on every quilt on display in the County. Just go to www.shawanocountry.com and click on the barn quilt icon.

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