

Arbor View Gardens have County's 202nd Barn Quilt

Arbor View Gardens at E10540 County Road C, Clintonville, is home to Shawano County's 202nd barn quilt. The quilt pattern, appropriately called Arbor View, represents the trees, flowers and other plants that beautify the gardens from May through September.

The gardens are owned by Andy and Sharon Gleisner. It's a non-profit corporation whose goals are to preserve and develop a private arboretum into public gardens, funded through donations as a public charity.

The original owners of the 120-acre farm were the Menomonie Indians in 1836, then by James Sawyer in 1855. The first people to settle on the property and farm the land were Gustave and Mary Fergot. They built the barn on the property on which the quilt is displayed in 1903.

The farm had several other owners over the years, including Wayne and LeAnne Poole in 1970. In 1975, Andy and Sharon Gleisner purchased the farm, which then totaled 40 acres, and began planting the gardens that exist there today.

Andy studied horticulture at UW-Madison and he and Sharon came to northeast Wisconsin when he took a job at Wantas Floral in Clintonville. After they purchased the farm, Andy and Sharon began collecting and planting trees, shrubs and flowers surrounding their home. Over the years, it has developed into an outdoor museum of plants from around the world that are adapted to northeast Wisconsin. Because plants are identified and records kept, it is technically a botanical garden.

When preservation of the arboretum is assured, Andy and Sharon will donate the 35 acres surrounding their home to Arbor View. The perennial and water gardens surrounding the residence will remain available for public viewing.

William Noble, Director of Preservative Projects at The Garden Conservancy, said, "It is our hope that Arbor View will become a valued collection of woody plants and an educational resource for the residents of Wisconsin and beyond. Many arboretums began as private collections of trees and shrubs and eventually came to be recognized as important educational and cultural resources for their region."

Arbor View Gardens are open from May through September Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information on Arbor View, go to their Web site: arborviewgardens.org.

The Arbor View barn quilt was painted by the Shawano County barn quilt committee and was put on display by LeRoy and Keith Raddant of Raddant Electric in Shawano.

Anyone who is interested in participating in Shawano County's barn quilt project can contact project coordinator Jim Leuenberger at 715-524-5685 or 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 of Web site includes photos and information

on every barn quilt on display in Shawano County. Just go to www.shawanocountry.com and click on the barn quilt icon.