

Shawano County's 206th Barn Quilt is Temperance Tree

Shawano County's 206th barn quilt is on a Christmas tree farm owned by Matt and Sally Korbisch, N6461 Meadowlark Road, Wittenberg. Matt and Sally have owned Korbisch's Christmas Tree Farm (formerly Tannenbaum Acres) since 1978. The previous owners who made it into a Christmas tree farm were Frank and Sarah Granius, who started planting trees in the 1950s. Frank was a Surge milking machine repair man so he knew Frank Korbisch of Birnamwood, (Matt's dad), who was a dairy farmer. Frank Granius introduced Frank Korbisch to the art of shearing balsam trees that just grew wild to make them into Christmas trees to sell.

After Frank Granius died, Sarah, his wife, spoke to Matt's parents, Frank and Margaret Korbisch, about buying the Christmas tree farm. Sarah very badly wanted the property to remain a Christmas tree farm. When Frank and Margaret bought the tree farm in 1974, Matt and Sally were introduced to shearing trees all summer. "That has never changed," Sally said. "Mom and Dad made it possible for us to buy the tree farm and for this we are so grateful."

Matt and Sally have about 45 acres of Christmas trees and sell about 1000 a year, including balsam, spruce and frasier. The trees are sold wholesale, with the farthest order going to Wyoming. "We also have choose and cut where people can actually go 'over the river and through the woods' to cut their own tree," Sally said.

"After noticing barn quilts all over Shawano County as we drove around and reading about them in the newspapers, we wondered if we could get one for our shed," Sally said. "So we contacted project coordinator Jim Leuenberger and set a time to meet with him to pick out a pattern. In the end, we just knew our pattern had to be a Christmas tree design. The pattern is called Temperance Tree, which made us smile because that is one of the four cardinal virtues, besides fortitude, justice and prudence. Temperance is important to us because it encourages moderation and simplicity in this life, to make room for God. When we asked Jim to put a cross in our quilt pattern, because our faith is so important to us, he did it beautifully."

"This Barn Quilt Project is something we all should be so proud of in Shawano County," Matt added. "We encourage anyone with a barn or shed to check into it and see if a barn quilt is in your future. Shawano County is already billed as the Barn Quilt Capital of Wisconsin. And who knows? Is a Guinness World Record possible?"

The Korbisch barn quilt was painted by the Shawano County barn quilt committee and 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 via 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 barn quilt on display in Shawano County. Just go to www.shawanocountry.com and click on the barn quilt icon.