

Shawano Pathways Sponsors County's 207th Barn Quilt

The Shawano area's bicycling group, called Shawano Pathways, has sponsored its second and the county's 207th barn quilt as part of the countywide barn quilt project that was started about three years ago. The quilt, called Bicycling is Life, is displayed on a barn on a farm owned by Ken Lynch, N353 Highway 47, about eight miles south of Bonduel. The pattern was designed by Nick Bleser, who has a degree in graphic arts from NWTC and who has been working with the biking group on other projects, including the Bike the Barn Quilts rally slated for September 28.

The barn on which the quilt is displayed was built in the early 1900s. The quilt block in the lower right hand quadrant of the pattern was designed by Lynch's ten-year-old daughter Katelyn. The wrench and screwdriver in the pattern represent tools used in Ken's small engine repair business.

The original owners of the farm were Martin and Mary Ciesielczyk, who emigrated from Poznan, Poland to the U.S. in 1887. They originally settled in Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania. They had seven children: Walter, Mike, Paul, Joe, Andrew, Martha and Antonette. Martin died in 1938 and Mary in 1954. Andrew then took over ownership of the farm and continued in the dairy business and raised beagle dogs. A unique feature on the farm is that the silo has always been painted white.

Highway 47 did not originally pass by the farm, but instead the farm was on a dead end road. Old highway 47 passed through Briarton at that time and years later was relocated one mile west to its present location.

Lynch purchased the farm eight years ago, moving to the area from Cudahy. He had been in the small engine repair business for 30 years and opened a similar business in 2006, called NEW Repair. He moved here from the Milwaukee area "because I wanted to live in the country," Lynch said.

Shawano Pathways received a Mielke grant for the September 28 Bike the Barn Quilts rally, which included the sponsorship of three biking-themed barn quilts. For more information about the rally, contact Matty Mathison at matty@frontiernet.net, Shawano Pathways.org or the Shawano Country Chamber of Commerce at 715-524-2139.

The 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.