

Navarino Nature Center Hosts County's 219th Barn Quilt

Shawano County's 219th barn quilt is now displayed on a barn adjacent to the Navarino Nature Center (NNC), W5646 Lindsten Road, Shiocton, located in the southeastern section of Shawano County. The quilt pattern, called Cattails and Cranes, was designed by Nature Center staff in collaboration with Shawano County barn quilt project coordinator Jim Leuenberger. The quilt was sponsored by nature center members Ron and Eldean Grosskopf.

"The idea for the Cattails and Cranes barn quilt pattern came from the use of the nature center's logo, the cattail," Tim Ewing, NNC director said. In the pattern, cattails are featured in each corner, surrounded by blue sky. The golden square symbolizes the sun and the use of solar power at the nature center. Flying through the sun is a silhouette of a Sandhill crane. "It's appropriate to have a crane in the pattern as some 5,000 to 15,000 cranes call the Navarino Wildlife area their home from spring to fall," Ewing said.

The barn on which the quilt is displayed was owned by Alvin and Mildred Lindsten and became part of the wildlife area in 1976. The quilt is best viewed from the Nature Center parking area and gardens. The Grosskopfs said they had been thinking about sponsoring a barn quilt for quite some time, so when they heard the Nature Center was looking for a sponsor, they responded immediately. "We are really pleased to be part of this project," Ron said, "and we'd love to sponsor another quilt if the opportunity comes along."

Navarino Nature Center was founded in April 1986 by a group of area residents. It is located on the 15,000 acre Navarino Wildlife Area (WDNR), leasing 40 acres from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for facilities and programming.

The mission of the nature center is to educate people of all ages on the importance of conserving natural resources and wildlife habitat, promoting renewable energy and developing a healthy lifestyle by engaging in wellness opportunities. Naturalist staff and volunteers teach public and school programs throughout the year on a variety of topics. Visitors can walk through the building and see various exhibits, including mammals, birds, a bee hive, renewable energy and history. There are numerous trails for visitors to watch wildlife, enjoy birding, hike, go snowshoeing or cross country skiing.

"Navarino Nature Center became interested in becoming a part of the Shawano County barn quilt project to help increase visibility to residents and visitors to Shawano County," Ewing said. "The nature center has a great deal of information, programs and activities that are offered to residents and visitors throughout the year. Hosting a barn quilt is one more way to engage people and introduce them to the wonders of the Navarino Nature Center."

The NNC barn quilt was painted by the Shawano County barn quilt committee and was put on display by Bruce Teetzen and Keith Raddant of Raddant Electric in Shawano.

Anyone wishing 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.