

Couple Married 68 Years Sponsors 220th Barn Quilt

Ray and Arlene Ruechel, who have been married for 68 years, have sponsored Shawano County's 220th Barn Quilt. The pattern they selected for their barn quilt is painted red, white and blue and is called Phoenix. It is displayed on their barn at N912 Old Highway 47, Pulaski.

The Ruechels have lived on their 60-acre farm the entire 68 years they have been married. Ray is 90 and Arlene 88. Ray's parents, William and Marie, owned the farm for 25 years starting in 1920. They milked 14 cows and also had chickens, pigs and beef cattle. They sold eggs in town.

Both Ray and Arlene were longtime 4-H leaders and their kids were active in 4-H as well. For 30 years, Ray worked as a truck driver for Murphy Construction in Black Creek. Arlene worked off the farm as well, for ten years as a tailor for the former Chaimsons in Shawano, then for another ten years as a tailor at Town and Country Cleaners in Shawano. She still enjoys sewing and her sewing machine is always set up and ready to go.

Since they are both retired, Ray and Arlene rent out their land to Jeff and Carolynn Lehdorf, who coincidentally have barn quilts on both their farms located on County S south of Bonduel. Carolyn is the one who encouraged the Ruechels to get a barn quilt. "We think the quilt looks just great and really stands out on our barn," Arlene said.

The Ruechel 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 who would like to participate 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 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.