

## Rising Star is County's 221<sup>st</sup> Barn Quilt

LeRoy and Janice Miller have sponsored Shawano County's 221<sup>st</sup> barn quilt for their barn at 420 County N, Birnamwood. The pattern they selected is called Rising Star and is displayed on their barn that is painted green.

It is estimated the barn was built in the 1930s. The earliest known owner of the farm was John Krull, who raised chickens there in 1950. It is believed two sisters lived there prior to that and had a small farm. Krull had previously sold some of the property bordering the road to Orville Henderson and others who built houses there. Later, Tom and Sue Beckett purchased the house and remaining property from Krull and opened a vet clinic in Birnamwood. The barn was used for their veterinary needs.

The Becketts then sold the property to a Favre family who raised horses and ran a John Deere dealership. LeRoy and Janice purchased the property from the Favres in 1983.

"This has been a wonderful home for us and a great place to raise our three children," Janice said. "We've used the barn for storing hay and housing numerous animals, raised mainly as our childrens' pets over the years."

The Millers started with goats, which provided them with many adventures. Janice wanted to milk them for milk for the family to drink, make ice cream, etc., but she soon found out that working full time as a high school teacher and trying to milk goats twice a day was not for her. So the goats became pets, occasionally escaping, only to be found on the roof of their house or dancing on a vehicle roof. They also had geese, colorful chickens from South America, a couple horses, a cow, ducks, turkeys, Suffolk and Shetland sheep and even pigs. "Living in town presented adventures, entertainment and irritation to Birnamwood residents when occasional escapes occurred," Janice added.

For a few years, the Millers tapped maple trees and boiled maple sap on a barrel stove in the barn. "It was a small operation," Janice said, "just for the kids' entertainment and to give syrup to friends at Christmas. The kids would roast marshmallows and sing songs while watching the sap boil."

"So the barn has been a central part of our living here for the past 30 years," Janice said. "We will continue to enjoy it, especially now that it has a beautiful, bright barn quilt on its side. We will also continue enjoying other barn quilts as we drive and bike around Shawano County."

The Millers' 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 interested in participating in Shawano County's barn quilt project can contact project coordinator Jim Leuenberger at 715-524-5685 or [jamesmleuenberger@yahoo.com](mailto:jamesmleuenberger@yahoo.com). You can also contact Patti Peterson, tourism manager at the Shawano Country Chamber of Commerce at 715-524-2139 or tourism at [Shawano.com](http://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](http://www.shawanocountry.com) and click on the barn quilt icon.