

Wife Surprises Husband with County's 224th Barn Quilt

When Dennis Rusch came home from a recent fishing trip, his wife, Cory, had a surprise waiting for him. It was Shawano County's 224th barn quilt and was a surprise birthday present Cory had been planning for quite some time. The pattern, which Cory has named The Wishing Horse, is on their barn at N4813 County C, Krakow. She chose a horse to be part of the pattern because she always liked horses, but never owned one. "So this is the horse I never had," Cory said, "and is probably the closest I'll ever get."

The five acres the barn is located on was purchased by Dennis from Harold, Leonard and Arnold Simon. It was actually an 80 acre farm, but John Carroll, who purchased the other 75, didn't want the buildings. Harold Raaths owned the farm before the Simon brothers, and probably had the barn built. He had a dairy herd and Dennis' dad, who was a milk hauler, picked up milk there.

Dennis grew up just two miles down County Highway C. His parents had a 40-acre farm with a small dairy herd. Cory grew up in Niagara Falls, N.Y. She and Dennis have been married for 11 years after meeting through a dating service in Green Bay. They have two adopted children, both from China. They adopted Anna in 2005 and Joseph in 2009.

Dennis is a machinist at Velocity Machine in Ashwaubenon and also has his own sawmill. He actually cut and installed much of the wood in their house, including the hardwood floors. So, when Cory decided to get a barn quilt for Dennis, she told him she needed two sheets of plywood for his birthday present. "But I really didn't have a way to make the barn quilt, so was more than happy to have Jim Leuenberger design and paint it for me. We just love how it turned out."

The Rusch barn quilt 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 by 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.

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