

Beran's Dairy Sponsors County's 256th Barn Quilt

Shawano County's 256th barn quilt has been sponsored as a Christmas gift to Allan and Vicky Beran from their sons Jeremy and Jason and Jason's wife, Stacey. Since it is on an active Shawano County dairy farm at N9498 Field Street, Birnamwood, the Berans wanted their quilt to have a dairy theme, so an image of a Holstein cow head was added to the center of the traditional quilt pattern.

"We just love how it came out," Allan said, "and especially the way the colors complement our buildings. It really adds a lot to our farm."

Farm History

In 1857, a piece of land was purchased from the U.S. government by Caleb Wheeler. Over the next 75 years, the land changed ownership several times. In 1933, the farm was purchased by Freida and Melvin Stone and in 1955 was sold to Arthur and Viola Britzke. In 1960, Joe and Gertrude Beran purchased the farm and started milking a small herd of dairy cows. The farm has been in the Beran family ever since.

The farm is located on the edge of the Village of Birnamwood, with most of the farmland in the Town of Birnamwood. The Packard Creek runs through the property behind the barn. In the early years, the Village cut large chunks of ice from Packard Creek for the village ice house. The creek has also been a great trout fishing spot for folks in the area.

Joe and Gertrude always enjoyed the country life, raising three children, Allan, Mike and Julie. All still reside in Birnamwood.

In 1994, Allan and Vicky purchased the farm with 50 dairy cows. Over the next several years, they added more cows, necessitating the need for more land for feed for the larger herd. They now milk 100 cows, have an additional 100 head of young stock and crop 550 owned and rented acres.

In 2010, Allan and Vicky built a three-row curtain-walled free stall barn, which greatly improved cow comfort for their herd. "Our cows are the most important part of our operation," Allan said, "so anything we can do to maximize comfort and improve production is to our advantage. It is also the reason we chose a quilt pattern with a cow theme to emphasize just how much our cows mean to us."

Family Operation

Allan and Vicky have two sons, Jeremy and Jason. Jason, his wife Stacey, Jeremy and two nephews comprise the farm's workforce, although all have off farm jobs as well. Jason and Stacey's daughter, Ava, just a year and a half old, already loves the cows.

Jason has a trucking business, Stacey is a Registered Nurse at Aspirus Clinic and Jeremy is a mechanic at Swiderski Equipment.

The Beran 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 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.