

Shawano County's 262nd Barn Quilt is a Brightly-Colored Chrysanthemum

At the 2013 Wisconsin State Fair, Robert and Joan Russ stopped at the Wisconsin tourism booth to talk to Patti Peterson, tourism manager for the Shawano County Chamber of Commerce, about the Shawano County barn quilt project. After hearing about it, they decided to sponsor a barn quilt for their daughter and son-in-law, Pete and Charlotte Mielke for their barn at W13599 County GG, Tigerton.

The pattern Pete and Charlotte picked out is of a brightly colored Chrysanthemum, which they call Char's Choice. "We wanted a bright pattern that would really stand out on our barn," Char said, "and we wanted to hang it 'on point' to make it look just a little different than most of the rest of the quilts in Shawano County. It looks just super."

The barn the quilt is displayed on was built in 1894 on a farm that was homesteaded in 1856 by Sylvester and Laura Martin. The 90-acre farm changed hands many times over the years. In 1950, Benjamin and Martha Pockat purchased it from Herman and Laura Wiesman. It remained in the Pockat family until 1987, when Pete and his first wife, Stephanie (who died of cancer), bought it from Ken and Elaine Pockat.

Pete had actually been dairy farming with his brother Ray on an adjoining 160-acre farm, milking 60 cows. But when the Pockat farm came up for sale, they purchased it as additional property on which to raise their replacement heifers.

Robert and Joan said they are excited about being sponsors of the quilt. "It really looks great," they said.

The 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 via email at jamesmleuenberger@yahoo.com. You can also contact Patti Peterson, tourism manager at the Shawano County 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.

#