

County's 181st Barn Quilt has Amish Pattern

Shawano County's 181st barn quilt, on display on Highway 45 between Marion and Tigerton, has a strikingly-colorful pattern called Amish Rubics Center. It is on a barn owned by Mike and Shawn Drefahl at W14149 Highway 45, Tigerton. The Drefahl barn quilt was the fourth one sponsored by the Woven Hearts Quilters of Tigerton.

Audrey Nelson of the quilting group said it's been fun for their group to sponsor the barn quilts. "Those we sponsored the quilts for have been so appreciative that it really made us feel good to have supported such a great project," Nelson said.

Echoing Nelson's remarks, fellow quilter Peggy Miller said, "As a quilter, I have always loved the idea of the fabric quilts we make giving warmth and comfort to those who receive them. The opportunity to sponsor four barn quilts has been a whole new way for our group to share the beauty of quilts while drawing attention to the wooden barns that are such an important part of Shawano County's history."

Mike and Shawn Drefahl grew up in the Clintonville area and moved to their present home in 1986 after purchasing the property from Mike's parents Jim and Charlene. They had purchased the farm from Denny and Audrey Pockat in 1985. The barn on the property was built in the 1920s and was always a dairy barn before Mike and Shawn moved there.

The pattern Mike and Shawn chose for their barn quilt includes an eight-pointed star, a familiar icon in barn stars that symbolizes abundance and goodwill. "Folk art tradition suggests stars represent good fortune, love, hope, harmony, energy, fertility and protection from fires," Shawn said. "The quilt looks beautiful and we've already had many compliments on it."

The Drefahl 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 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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