

## County's 216<sup>th</sup> Barn Quilt is American Hunter

Shawano County's 216<sup>th</sup> barn quilt is now on display on a farm owned by Nathan Retzlaff at W7775 Belle Plaine Avenue, Shawano. The quilt has been sponsored by Virginia (Ginny) Utke in memory of her husband Harry, who died in 1998. The pattern, which includes a silhouette of a deer head in the center, has been named American Hunter.

The farm was originally homesteaded by Fredrick Vorpahl in 1859 and was later owned by Emil and Amelia Vorpahl in 1898. Their son, Oliver, and his wife Marcella, purchased the farm in 1946 and built a new house on the property in 1959.

Harry and Virginia Utke purchased the farm in 1970 and started raising beef cattle. Several years later they bought a dairy herd and milked cows until Harry became ill with cancer.

"Harry always enjoyed hunting on our land," Ginny said, "so it seemed appropriate to have a deer head in the middle of our beautiful barn quilt. I am so happy to be able to be part of the Shawano County barn quilt project. It's just wonderful and has really put Shawano County on the map."

In 2001, Ginny sold 80 acres of the farm to Nathan Retzlaff, who raises hogs and dairy steers. He gets the dairy bull calves at a day old from his family's home dairy farm a mile up the road, where they milk about 80 Holstein cows. He raises them as feeders up to about 500 pounds, selling 15-20 per month. In addition, Nathan sells pigs to Adams Meats in Pella and to 4-H swine project members in Shawano and surrounding counties for their fair projects. This year he sold nearly 230 pigs as 4-H projects. Nathan and his wife, Tajia, have two sons, Ray and Oliver.

The Utke 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 via email at [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@shawano.com](mailto: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](http://www.shawanocountry.com) and click on the barn quilt icon.

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