

**April 24, 2015**

## **Shawano Optimists Sponsor Second Shawano County Barn Quilt**

The Shawano Optimist Club has sponsored its second, and Shawano County's 293rd barn quilt. It is on display on a farm owned by Kevin and Susan Palmer at N2536 State Highway 22, Shawano. The name of the pattern is Mosaic Squares and features the 4-H emblem in the center.

Kay Bloomer, president of the Shawano Optimists, said, "Our members are proud to support this exciting project that was started by one of our members, Jim Leuenberger. It's a project that helps give a positive image to our area and is another reason for tourists to come here and enjoy all we have to offer."

Kevin and Susan purchased the farm in 2010 to use for the livestock and horses they brought with them from California. Kevin was born and raised in southern California and worked in the printing industry for over 30 years. Susan grew up in western Wisconsin and was in 4-H starting in fifth grade in Chippewa County. "I loved all the projects," she said, "but my favorite was the dog project."

It was through the dog project and being exposed to dog shows that Susan decided she would like to be a dog groomer. She went to grooming school in California where she met Kevin. She has been grooming for 30 years and owns Doggie Detailers Grooming Salon in Clintonville.

Susan passed on her love of animals and 4-H to her and Kevin's children, Shannon and James. Both are in the horse and shooting sports projects and were in dairy and dog projects as well.

Kevin was in 4-H in California for a short while and now he and Susan are leaders in the horse project for Belle Plaine 4-H Club. Kevin is also a Shooting Sports leader for Shawano County and he and Susan are on the horse key committee.

### **Farm History**

A Booth family settled the property around 1900. The house and barn were built between 1905 and 1910. In 1925, a Schmidt family (ancestors of the folks who had Schmidt Lumber Company in Shawano), purchased the farm and, like the Booths, had dairy cattle. In 1954, a McKay family moved to the farm from Milwaukee and also had a dairy herd. The farm totaled 124 acres at the time.

Kevin and Susan purchased the farm in 2010. There is a pond in the middle of the now 20-acre hobby farm that was made by Nero Construction (local operator Roger Schilling). The creek that runs from the spring-fed pond runs into the main creek of the Embarrass River.

Kevin and Susan looked at 35 to 40 hobby farms before purchasing the one where they now reside. "This place has everything Susan wanted...a 100-year old farm house, a barn to house our mini-Jerseys and horses, land on which to grow food for us and our livestock, and plenty of room to run," Kevin said.

"We love it here," Kevin added. "And we have found that, as a good friend of ours from our 4-H club told us, people around here are all cut from the same cloth. They are very friendly and are always ready to help."

The Palmer 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.