

County's 185th Barn Quilt is Tribute to FFA

The Bonduel FFA Chapter has designed, painted and sponsored Shawano County's 185th barn quilt. It is on display on a barn owned by Matt and Betsy Stanke, N4972 Lakeview Road, Bonduel. The Bonduel FFA members named the quilt "Things in their Seasons," as the quilt features images that represent the four seasons...a flower for spring, a corn stalk for summer, a maple leaf for fall and a snowflake for winter. Chapter members Kristin Allen and Michael Donnermeyer painted the quilt. It was put on display by LeRoy Raddant and Bruce Teetzen of Raddant Electric in Shawano.

The Stanke farm dates back to 1871. It is estimated the barn on the property was built in the early 1900s. For a time, the farm was owned by a Hartwig family, ancestors of the Hartwigs in Shawano who own Twigs Beverage.

In 1969, the farm was purchased by Jerry and Trudy Stanke, Matt's parents, from Dave and Viola Farris. At that time, the farm totaled 250 acres. At first, Jerry and Trudy grew vegetables that they sold in the parking lot of the former Lasch Motors on Green Bay Street in Shawano. Matt took over the farm from his parents in 1980. In 1985, they started milking cows with 20 Holstein. When Matt and Betsy decided to quit dairying in 2009, the herd had grown to about 40 cows.

Matt and Betsy have four children who were born and raised on the farm. The whole family has been actively involved in FFA, thus the FFA emphasis for their barn quilt. "The quilt has a lot of meaning," Matt said, "and we've had many positive comments about it."

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.