

Shawano County's 174th Barn Quilt is Southern Star

"Ever since the barn quilt project started, I wanted a barn quilt, but I didn't have a barn," said Matty Mathison, well known former volleyball coach and one of the Shawano area's most avid bikers. "The Don and Marilee Eggert farm is on one of my regular biking routes, so I asked them about putting a quilt on their barn and they graciously agreed."

The quilt pattern Mathison and the Eggerts decided on is called Southern Star. It is on a barn on the Eggert farm at W8585 Hazel Drive, Shawano. It was sponsored by Mathison and her partner, Harlan Pygman, in honor of her mom, who is a quilter.

The Eggert farm was homesteaded by Don's grandparents. The barn on which the quilt is mounted was built in the 1920s. Don purchased the farm from his parents, Franklin and Hattie Krueger a year after he graduated from high school in 1972. Don milked cows for a few years but now the 80 acres plus another 25 acres of rented land are used to produce corn, oats and alfalfa to feed out Holstein steers.

Don and Marilee have three children, Mike-27, Chris-24 and Sara-22. Their barn quilt was put up on October 9, which was their 30th wedding anniversary.

"The Southern Star" quilt on the Eggert barn will make my bike rides even better," Mathison said. "Harlan and I are proud to be able to sponsor it as part of the barn quilt project. What a wonderful way to color our county!"

Mathison said the area bike group, SPOKES, is creating barn quilt bike rides. Presently there are seven routes varying in length from 12 to 35 miles. "We have routes leaving from Gresham, Angelica, Bonduel, White Clay Lake, Cloverleaf Lakes and Shawano," Mathison said. "As we get more quilts up around the county, we may be able to create even more routes. There are lots of barns around the county just waiting for a quilt, so I hope people continue to contact Jim Leuenberger about putting one on their barn."

The Eggert barn quilt was painted by the Shawano County barn quilt committee and was put up 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 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 quilt on display in Shawano County. Just go to www.shawanocountry.com and click on the barn quilt icon.