

Montour-Engel Employees Surprise Owner with Christmas Gift

The employees of Montour-Engel have presented owner Wayne Engel with a special Christmas gift, Shawano County's 283rd barn quilt. The quilt is mounted on a barn adjacent to the Montour-Engel office at 137 South Washington in Shawano. The barn is one of the oldest buildings in the downtown Shawano area and is the only original building from when the business started. It was originally a horse barn.

"We never know what to get Wayne for Christmas," Sue Patrikus said, "so why not get him a barn quilt." The pattern they selected is called The Comfort Quilt. "We thought that would be appropriate since we specialize in making our customers comfortable with selling and servicing air conditioning and heating," Sue added. The 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.

The company was started in 1921 by Robert Gehrke, grandfather to Tom Montour. Tom's dad, Lester, succeeded Gehrke as owner of the business. When he died in 1992, Tom took over. Tom acquired his formal training at Milwaukee Tech, but grew up in the business like most generational owners.

After Tom and his wife Jane died tragically in a motorcycle accident on March 6, 2000, their three sons, Chad, Chris and Jim, became the owners. They sold the business to current owner Wayne Engel in 2002.

Since it was founded, Montour-Engel has been a Lennox dealer. Lennox presidential plaques are proudly displayed in the office.

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. You can also contact Patti Peterson, tourism manager at the Shawano Country Chamber of Commerce at tourism@shawano.com or 715-524-2139. A link on the Shawano Chamber website 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.