

County's 295th Barn Quilt Takes "Unexpected Twist"

Shawano County's 295th barn quilt is on display on a farm called Blue Royal Stable owned by Dan and Diane Schnell at N1817 Two Creek Road, Bonduel, in the Town of Lessor. The quilt is called Unexpected Twists and is painted in blue, gold, black and white, the colors of Blue Royal Stable and the Bonduel Bears. Diane and her and Dan's three daughters, Ashlyn, Breanna and Cierra, painted the majority of the quilt. "When deciding on a pattern for the quilt, it was only fitting that a horse be part of it since the barn started out as a horse barn so many years ago," Diane said.

The quilt was sponsored by North Country Homes of Bonduel. Bart and Shane Huntington and their sister, Paige Dreier, owners of North Country, said, "We were all born and raised in Shawano and our family has had its business in the area for over 40 years. Sponsoring this beautiful barn quilt is another way for us to give back to the community that has been so good to us."

North Country Homes is Wisconsin's number one modular and manufactured home builder, serving Wisconsin and Upper Michigan since 1973.

The land where the quilt is displayed was purchased in 1883 for \$100 an acre by Frederick Stuewer, who came to the U.S. from Germany. The existing barn was built in 1904. It is 150 feet long and 40 feet wide and has eight drive-in bays. Its first use was to house driving horses and buggies. In 1913, the barn was converted to a dairy barn and in 1934, was doubled in size. At that time, running water was added to the inside of the barn.

The barn housed dairy cattle for nearly 75 years for the Steuwer, Stever and Bontrager families. The Schnells purchased the barn in 2000 and today it is home to steers and pigs, their daughters' 4-H projects. It is also used for storage for their adjacent horse stable. The farm is a "sister" farm to Blue Royal Stable, Inc., the Schnells' moderately-sized horse boarding, lesson and training center.

Diane credits her dad, Everette Johnston for restoring the barn. "He has spent countless hours on it over the past several years," she said. Neighbor and close friend, Bill Breckon, and his sons, also helped with the restoration of the inside of the barn, now used to house beef steers.

"We just love how beautiful the quilt came out and have gotten many compliments from neighbors and friends already," Diane said. "We are so happy to be part of this wonderful project and thank North Country Homes for their sponsorship."

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