

Wonky Pine is Shawano County's 296th Barn Quilt

Shane and Ellie Breitenbach have sponsored Shawano County's 296th barn quilt, now displayed on their barn on Old Highway 22 east of Cecil, Wisconsin. The barn on which the quilt is displayed was built in 1910.

The name of the five-acre Breitenbach farm is Wonky Pine Farm and the name of the quilt pattern is Wonky Pine. "We chose the name for a couple reasons," Ellie said. "First, because Shane and I have a fun sense of humor, and second, because on the entire property, there is just one, single pine tree. It's on the northwest corner of our property, is a massive, loner, very uneven pine tree, and well...wonky."

After deciding to get a barn quilt, Shane and Ellie met with project coordinator Jim Leuenberger to pick out the pattern and colors for the quilt. "Shane and I wanted the center of the quilt to be some variation of our wonky pine," Ellie said. "The starburst border reflects our love of vivid, vibrant colors, and the colors behind the wonky pine tree were chosen for their similarity to a sunrise or sunset, depending whether your glass is half full or half empty. The quilt is even more beautiful than we thought it would be."

A Kohn family homesteaded the farm in 1900 and constructed the large, brick farmhouse that year. They remained owners of the farm until selling it to a Beilfuss family in the early 1950s. The Beilfuss' original homestead was just down the road and they moved to the new house to have more room for their family. "It was evident the Beilfuss children were blessed and loved being raised on the farm," Ellie said. "We were incredibly excited to be able to purchase the property because it is always the home we wanted." Shane and Ellie are only the third occupants of the house.

Shane and Ellie have three sons, Collin-13, Leland-3 and Henry-1. Also on the farm are dogs, chickens, ducks and several cats. It will eventually become a hobby farm.

Shane and Ellie are in the process of remodeling the farmhouse, updating the entire upstairs but keeping the house's historical significance. All of the original framing and walls have been reused and the paint scheme follows the 1900s era of the house. "When we bought the house, we discovered a linoleum area rug on the floor," Ellie said. "After further research, we discovered those rugs were used in the 1920s and '30s to protect and decorate the hardwood floors. This rug had clearly not been moved in a long time."

The Breitenbach 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.

#