

Game Farm Featured in County's 309th Barn Quilt

Shawano County's 309th barn quilt is a striking pattern on display at J & H Game Farm, W5810 J & H Road, Shiocton, a mile and a half west of Navarino on State Highway 156. The quilt was sponsored by J & H Game Farm in memory of Jim Johnson. Appropriately named Game Farm, the quilt was painted by the Shawano County Barn Quilt committee.

J & H Game Farm was started in 1964 by Jim and Joanne Johnson, Jim's brother, Don, and Joanne's brother, Bill Horvath, thus Johnson=J and Horvath=H. Bill was completing college with a degree in conservation and English and was expected to run the recreational business.

The first purchase of land was a 305-acre parcel in the middle of the woods at \$15 per acre. A year later, the land where the game farm is now located became available and was purchased as well. Bill graduated from college and got a lucrative offer in Pennsylvania, so Jim and Joanne sold their dairy farm and moved seven miles north and started the present business in 1970. Today the pheasant business releases about 3,000 birds each year for its members.

Jim and Joanne's oldest daughter, Diane, got married in 1981 and her husband, Steve, began working part-time on the farm. Today they both work full time at the business.

In the early years, the game farm offered a trap shooting facility and in the 1970s, when there was a lot of snow, J & H became a stop on the snowmobile trail. Their Friday night fish fry was especially popular.

The hunting business kept increasing slightly until 1990 when the first sporting clay course was introduced. Sporting Clays became so popular that there are now 11 courses ranging in degree of difficulty for the novice to the experienced shooters.

J & H has hosted four state championships, two national championships and was the original club to host the largest shoot besides the state championship, the Wisconsin Ironman, which started in 1995. "We are very honored to host more than a dozen fundraisers and charity shoots throughout the year as well," Diane said.

J & H, which is open year round, throws over a million clay targets each year for tournaments, fundraisers and for its everyday shooters. The business now totals 715 acres for its sporting clays, pheasant hunting and for its shareholders to hunt deer. "Practicing Quality Deer Management on our property, along with most of our surrounding neighbors, has shown excellent results with the harvest of some dandy-sized bucks," Diane said. J & H has a 2,700 square foot clubhouse with a modest pro shop. "We are proud to have been able to serve the public with our family-operated business for over 50 years," Diane said.

The barn quilt at J & H game farm was put on display by LeRoy and Keith Raddant of Raddant Electric in Shawano.