

County's 374th Barn Quilt Honors Family's Farming History

In late 2012, Michaela Lardinois wanted to do something to honor her father and satisfy her own love of farming. She decided to start a dairy herd again, but instead of having dairy cows like her parents and ancestors had, she decided to start a herd of dairy goats. She found a herd of 200 goats in Ripon, Wisconsin that she purchased and the herd grew from there. She eventually expanded the herd to 600 goats, but in 2018, Kolb-Lena, the plant where she shipped her milk, stopped transporting milk from northern Wisconsin, so the herd had to be sold.

As a tribute to the history of her family's dairy farm, Michaela and her husband, Jamie, have sponsored a barn quilt for their beautiful barn that remains as a reminder of the farm that was started over 100 years ago. The colorful quilt pattern, which features a silhouette of a goat in the center, is called Vincent Van GOAT and is displayed on the Lardinois barn at N4091 Green Valley Road, Pulaski. It is Shawano County's 374th barn quilt. "I am so happy that we could honor our family's love of farming with this beautiful barn quilt," Michaela said.

Michaela's great grandparents, Stella and Frank Socha purchased the original 80 acres and had a dairy herd until 1959. That year they sold the farm to one of their sons, Henry, who expanded the dairy herd to 50 milking cows and 120 head overall. They also had purchased an additional 40 acres, bringing their farm to 120 acres of cropland.

Tony Socha, Michaela's dad, took over the family farm in 1987. He updated the farm by adding a pipeline milking system and some silos. But with milk prices dropping, it was difficult to continue dairying, so they sold the cows in 1996.

Jamie and Michaela, and their two children, Gracie-9 and Brenton-6, continue to share their love of farming and carry on their family's farming tradition by raising some beef cattle, hogs, sheep and, of course, goats.

The barn quilt was painted by the Shawano County barn quilt committee and was put on display by LeRoy Raddant and his grandson, Keenan, both of whom work at Raddant Electric in Shawano.

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