



Lincoln County

## *Lincoln County*

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### Lincoln County Barn Quilts

If you have traveled in other parts of Wisconsin you may have noticed colorfully painted designs displayed on barns, known as barn quilts. These designs are part of the American Barn Quilt Movement ([www.americanprofile.com/barnquilts](http://www.americanprofile.com/barnquilts)), which began in Adams County, Ohio, when Donna Sue Groves painted a quilt block on her tobacco barn to honor her mother, a master quilter. These quilts have now spread to more than two dozen states nationwide. Shawano County, Wisconsin is an outstanding example, with over 300 barn quilts ([www.shawanocountry.com/](http://www.shawanocountry.com/)).

Made for barns, not beds, “barn quilts” are quilt patterns painted on wooden panels that are hung on the exterior walls of barns or other agricultural buildings. They provide an opportunity to display quilt art and brighten rural areas while showcasing and encouraging the preservation of local barns and farms. The Barn Quilt designs are personal. Some of the quilt designs are adapted from historic patterns; others are new designs developed by local artists in conjunction with the barn owners.

Through the cooperation of the University of Wisconsin-Extension Lincoln County, the Merrill Historical Society, Lincoln County Farm Bureau and with startup funding from the Merrill Area Community Foundation, the Barn Quilt Movement has arrived in Lincoln County. Although any barn in the county may be eligible for participation in the project, it seems appropriate to begin with farms that have been honored as Century Farms by the Historical Society. Through this project, people will be able to view our historic agricultural icons in their new role as public art.

Our first two quilts were hung in 2014 on farms that were the 2009 Century Farm Award recipients. The first Barn Quilt Project was hung at the Hanson family farm located on Highway 17 north of Gleason. Working with Natalie Watland, an artist from the Tomahawk area, the Hanson’s designed a quilt pattern incorporating the beef cattle the family currently raises as well as the farm’s location along the Prairie River. The farm family chosen for the second barn quilt was the Pope-Will farm located on Pope Road just north of Merrill. Working with Natalie Watland, the family designed a quilt pattern incorporating the Pope Milk bottle as the farm was the home of Pope Dairy. Our third quilt was hung in 2015 at the Koehler family farm located on Highway 64 west of Merrill. This farm was a 2003 Century Farm Award recipient. Working with Natalie Watland, the family designed a quilt pattern representing the original use of the farm for dairy and its current use for beef. We are currently working on our fourth quilt with the Heidemann family, a 2010 Century Farm Award recipient and our fifth quilt with the Buck family, a 1991 Century Farm Award recipient.

The Barn Quilt Committee is looking for additional farm families who are interested in being a part of the project. Financial support is available to cover costs. Additional information is attached including an application for barn quilt location form. For further information please contact Debbie Moellendorf at 715-539-1077 or Bea Lebal or Pat Burg at the Merrill Historical Society at 715-536-5652. You can also visit the Barn Quilts page located on the Lincoln County UW-Extension website at <http://lincoln.uwex.edu/p/lincoln-county-barn-quilt-project/> for more information.

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#### Mission Statement

“As part of the University of Wisconsin-Extension, we provide knowledge and resources to engage people and their communities in positive change where they live and work.”