



# MI BARN

Fall 2010 - No. 56

PROMOTING APPRECIATION, PRESERVATION, AND REHABILITATION OF MICHIGAN BARN, FARMSTEADS, AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

## MBPN Launches Pride of Ownership Certificate Program

Are you proud of the care you have taken to maintain your farmstead? Is there a farmstead you admire each time you pass by? If so, the Michigan Barn Preservation Network (MBPN) would like to know so the property owner can be recognized with a "Pride of Ownership Certificate."

"How the buildings are being used is not relevant. What matters is their structural integrity and visual appeal," said Dan Creyts, a member of the MBPN board and coordinator of the Certificate program.

The Network receives inquiries from people interested in acquiring property that has farm buildings or who just enjoy seeing a well-kept farmstead. Michigan farmsteads have become back-drops for film makers, subjects for artists, and photo favorites for tourists.

Each member of the MBPN board will have certificates to give out. When a board member is notified of a potential honoree, he or she will contact the individual.

"It will be a challenge to recognize farmsteads in every part of the state," said Creyts, "We hope barn lovers across both peninsulas will help celebrate well-kept heritage farmsteads."

Contact Creyts at (517) 322-0315 or any member of the MBPN board.



Photo: Jan Corey Arnett

*The Fisher-Radtke Barn, Ludington, built circa 1900, is the first to be honored with a Pride of Ownership Certificate. The centennial barn was extensively renovated in 1991 and was one of five on the 2010 Barns & Byways Tour.*

## Celebrate Michigan's Beautiful Barns Barns Sought for 2011 Recognition

Nominations are now being taken for the MBPN's 2011 **Barns of the Year Recognition** a highly-celebrated event held each year at the organization's annual conference in March. The 2011 conference takes place March 11 and 12 at Michigan State University.

The program includes four categories: 1) Continued Family/Private Agricultural Use, 2) Family/Private Adaptive Use, 3) Non-Profit Agricultural or Adaptive Use, and 4) Commercial Agricultural or Adaptive Use. The barn must be used for one of these purposes, retain its overall appearance as a barn, both interior and exterior and have been built before 1960.

As agriculture has changed, so has the use of heritage barns. While some continue in agricultural use, others are now being used as homes, offices, restaurants, retail outlets, meeting halls, museums and more. Barns which have been moved and rebuilt can be considered for recognition.

It is not necessary that the person submitting the nomination

own the barn or barns. Provide detail about the history of the barn and the work done to preserve it. Send high-quality digital or high resolution digital scans of photographs of all four elevations of the barn, interior images, and images documenting the work before, during, and after. Photos will be retained for the MBPN's archives. Images sent on home-scanners are not acceptable. Owners receive a plaque, a one-year membership in MBPN, recognition at the annual conference, and media coverage.

"The criteria that the judges use includes the completeness of information provided about the barn and repair or maintenance work that has been done, quality and completeness of photographs that illustrate the work, the setting and visual appeal of the barn, the preservation of original materials or sensitivity of changes to the structure that maintain the character, and the

*continued on page 2*

cont. from page 1

## Celebrate Michigan's Beautiful Barns...

"heroic effort" demonstrated by the nominee in preserving their barn," explains Tom Nehil, chair of the Barns of the Year committee. Barns will be ranked by committee members until a consensus is reached.

Nominations must be postmarked by December 31, 2010. Late nominations will be kept for the following year's competition if the applicant desires. Send to:

**Barn of the Year Committee**  
c/o 414 S Burdick Suite 300  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Guidelines can also be found online at [www.mibarn.net](http://www.mibarn.net). Click on the "ABOUT" tab and then go to the "Recognition Programs" link in the list along the left margin.

For more details, contact:

Tom Nehil [tnehil@nehilsivak.com](mailto:tnehil@nehilsivak.com) or  
(269) 383-3111 during business hours

## MiBARN of the Year 2011

*Nominations must be postmarked by December 31, 2010.*

Attach this list to your nomination to be sure you've included everything required.

- Name of barn owner, address/phone/email
- Person submitting nomination, address/phone/email
- Location of barn, address/county
- History of the barn to include as much of the following as possible: date built, name of builder, past and present uses, unique features, dimensions, work done to preserve it, recognition it may have received. Be as detailed as possible. No word limit on submission.

Category in which barn is nominated:

- continuing family/private agricultural use
- family/private adaptive use
- non-profit agricultural or adaptive use
- commercial agricultural or adaptive use

*Please remember that photographs must be high quality (7.2 or more megapixel digital) suitable for reprint, enlargement, and display. Images scanned on paper are not acceptable! Images will not be returned. Do NOT write on the photo with pencil or ballpoint pen or use paper clips. Attach a "post it" with information or use a photo-safe pen for labeling. Provide photos of all four elevations (sides) of the barn if possible. MBPN Membership is NOT required to be eligible for recognition.*

Direct questions to Tom Nehil at [tnehil@nehilsivak.com](mailto:tnehil@nehilsivak.com) or (269) 345-9211 evenings, and nominations to:

Barn of the Year Committee  
c/o 414 S Burdick Suite 300  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

## Officers

**Steve Stier, President**  
Meridian Township  
(517) 648-2933  
[stephenstier@gmail.com](mailto:stephenstier@gmail.com)

**Tim Wiles, Vice President**  
Howell (517) 548-9942  
Cell (810) 599-8822  
[eus1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eus1@sbcglobal.net)

**Rob Foti, Treasurer**  
Hartland (810) 632-9248  
[Robert.foti@fanucrobotics.com](mailto:Robert.foti@fanucrobotics.com)

**Judy Grant, Secretary**  
Gladwin (989) 426-8129  
[jagrant@ejourney.com](mailto:jagrant@ejourney.com)

## Board

**Dan Creyts**  
Charlotte (517) 322-0315

**Evelyn Johnson**  
Traverse City (231) 223-9239  
Cell (231) 499-8264  
[ELadybugTC@charter.net](mailto:ELadybugTC@charter.net)

**Tammis Donaldson**  
Royal Oak (248) 853-9700  
[tammis@ekocite.com](mailto:tammis@ekocite.com)  
[www.ekocite.com](http://www.ekocite.com)

**Randy Mouw**  
Rockford (616) 874-5624

**Marcia Stucki**  
Galesburg (269) 665-5281  
[cedarhillecho@gmail.com](mailto:cedarhillecho@gmail.com)

**Vera Wiltse**  
Coleman (989) 465-1216  
[vera@wiltse.com](mailto:vera@wiltse.com)

**Jack Worthington**  
Grand Ledge (517) 627-5763  
[Worthin4@msu.edu](mailto:Worthin4@msu.edu)

## Committee Chairs

**Barn Tour/Pride of Ownership**  
Dan Creyts

**Technical Assistance**  
Tammis Donaldson

**Membership**  
Marcia Stucki

**Program**  
Vera Wiltse

**Nominations**  
Jack Worthington

**Communications**  
(vacant)

**Awards**  
Tom Nehil  
Kalamazoo (269) 345-9211  
(evenings)  
[tnehil@nehilsivak.com](mailto:tnehil@nehilsivak.com)

Robert Slocum  
Newsletter Design  
*Designworks*  
Battle Creek, MI 49015  
(269) 964-9894  
[bob.designworks@gmail.com](mailto:bob.designworks@gmail.com)

Jan Corey Arnett  
MiBARN Editor  
*Coralan Communications*  
Battle Creek, MI 49017  
(269) 589-6893  
[coralan@comcast.net](mailto:coralan@comcast.net)

## The Perfect Gift

Give someone who loves barns a perfect gift – a membership in the MBPN. For as little as \$30 for one person up to \$1,000 for a lifetime membership, your gift delivers benefits to the barn lover and Michigan's heritage barns. A gift to the MBPN in honor or memory of someone special is also a fine way to show that you care. For more information, visit [www.mibarn.net](http://www.mibarn.net) or call any member of the board. We'll be happy to talk with you.



## President's Message

# Is My Barn "Historic"?

This seemingly simple question can turn into a complicated and confounding answer. I try to simplify things by dividing barns and all old structures into what I call capital "H" Historic, and lower case "h" historic. The capital "H" historic structures are the ones that have passed, or are likely to pass the official test for listing on the National Register Of Historic Places, or, National Register for short. There is more information about this in another article in this newsletter. For barns to qualify for the capital "H" they are usually within an established National Register Historic District or part of a National Register listed farmstead. Although there have been efforts to have more rural and agricultural properties listed on the National Register their numbers are still very low, as the eligibility bar is quite high, and the nomination process can be challenging.

My own unofficial determination about barns is that those built before about 1940 are all "historic" (note the lower case h in historic). The oldest ones, say, before the 1890s all had gable roofs and lacked hay-handling equipment. Then farmers began to change to the gambrel roof to enlarge the space in the haymows. Also around 1900 the earlier timber-frame construction began to give way to lighter framing methods called plank framing, which by the 1920s and '30s had nearly taken over. Regardless of framing type, these were almost always large, tall, multi-use barns used in support of small, diversified family farms powered by animal traction and steam-traction engines. These kinds of barns and this kind of farm began to decline beginning in the first quarter of the 20th century. By the 1940s, and '50s this decline had steepened into a sharp drop. The new modern agricultural structures are the metal-clad pole buildings that look nothing like those wonderful big old wooden barns. All of this said, when possible I sidestep the whole issue of Historic vs. historic by talking about "heritage barns" or "traditional barns."

Perhaps instead of asking what is "historic," we should be asking, "Is this structure worth saving?" In my mind, the answer about barns is 99.5% of the time is YES! ABSOLUTELY!

Steve Stier, Meridian Township



Photo: Janine Saputo

*It looks like a little red schoolhouse, but this neat structure is actually the Pine Cone Barn at the Civilian Conservation Corps Historic Site in Roscommon. Pine cones were dried in ovens and the seeds shaken out for the reforestation of Michigan in the 1920s.*

*The second of two Michigan barns selected for souping up in the Campbell's Soup/ FFA "Help Grow Your Own Soup" project has been given a fresh face. The 1920 Bowers School Farm Barn in Bloomfield Township drew hundreds of volunteers. The farm is one of the last in a heavily suburbanized area. It is used for real-world science curriculum and houses Bowers Academy, an alternative school.*



Photo: Ken Brock

## There's More to Preservation than just Barns!

Although the mission of the MBPN and the interest of most members focuses on traditional barns and farm buildings, it is important for barn preservationists to be familiar with, and appreciate the larger preservation world. At the 2010 MBPN annual conference in March, I clarified the roles and responsibilities of several organizations involved in "mainstream" historic preservation. In the next several issues I will simplify the "alphabet soup" of organizational names and the important details of what these groups do. We'll start with the federal government.

Federal preservation authority and responsibility begins with the Secretary of the Interior who is responsible for the National Park Service (NPS). Within the NPS, Heritage Preservation Services (HPS) "helps our nation's citizens and communities identify, evaluate, protect and preserve historic properties for the future." Of the many programs and services within the HPS, one of the most valuable to the general public is the "Preservation Briefs," that provide guidance on preserving, rehabilitating and restoring historic buildings. The Briefs cover more than 40 topics, from window repair to re-pointing masonry (<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/publications.htm>).

The NPS also keeps a list of designated historic properties called the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) (<http://www.nps.gov/nr/>). The general requirements for a property to be listed are its age, generally more than 50 years, and integrity, does it still look like it did in the past? The other test is of significance. Is the property associated with events, activities, or developments that were important in the past, or with the lives of people who were important in the past? Does it have significant architectural history, landscape history, or engineering achievements? Does it have the potential to yield information through archeological investigation?

The treatments of historic properties are Restoration, Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Preservation.. Visit ([http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standards\\_guidelines.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standards_guidelines.htm)). Generally speaking, work on most barns, by definition, is "Rehabilitation" and the guidelines for that treatment should be followed as much as possible. If your barn is listed, or is eligible to be listed and you are requesting tax credits, these guidelines must be followed. Next, we'll talk about the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Steve Stier, Meridian Township



*Jones tarped holes in the roof to allow the barn to dry inside while hay and clutter were cleaned out in preparation for dismantling and moving.*



Photos: Jan Corey Arnett

## Barn Makes Short Move for Long Life

The white pre-1915 gambrel barn on the west end of Battle Creek had been moved once when horses pulled it 200 feet over logs serving as rollers. In its new location, it was added onto as a working barn, housing cattle and hay. But when its life in agriculture ended circa the 1960s and the farm was sold, the barn collected clutter. Destructive vines crept up the walls, brushy roots grew into the foundation, and as the roof weakened, water poured in. The death knell was sounding.

Despite its weary outward appearance, the barn's frame, featuring a massive swing beam, stood firm though rotting hay was rapidly doing damage. Hope for new life for the old barn came when the barn's owner expressed a willingness to sell it to anyone who would take it down, salvage everything possible, and clean up the site. It was first considered by an out-of-state firm to become a barn house in Illinois but the company did not want to clean up the site. A nonprofit agricultural organization wanted the barn but

was rebuilding two other heritage barns on its property and could not manage a third project, at least not for a couple more years.

It was when Battle Creek resident A.J. Jones, who lives a few miles from the barn, saw it and envisioned how it would look on his property as a place for friends to gather and to house an eclectic collection of antiques, that a match was made. "I had thought about putting up a metal building," Jones said, "but it would have had no character, no heritage. My feelings would never have been what they are for this wonderful barn."

The 1,450-square foot gambrel-roof barn was purchased for \$1 and was dismantled and rebuilt by BarnCats of Rockford earlier this year with new wood coming from trees on the Jones property where needed. About 60% of the original barn was reused with the awe-inspiring swing beam and hand-hewn timbers serving as focal points. Jones added a basement with radiant heat, will be installing bathrooms, and says, "I love this barn. I am definitely a barn hugger."

## National Barn Alliance Seeks Groups to Host Model Barn

A scale model of a timber-frame barn is coming to Michigan from New York state and will travel throughout the state during 2011. Schools, community groups, event planners, and anyone interested in hosting the model can contact Tammi Donaldson at (248)629-7428, [tammis@ekocite.com](mailto:tammis@ekocite.com).

Construction of the Midwest style barn based on an 1842 structure, involved the use of four species of lumber. The model weighs about 1000 lbs and has a footprint of 8' x 12' x 7.' It is one of two models reflecting types of American barns, the construction of which was made possible through a grant to the National Barn Alliance (NBA) by Dr. Russell G. Mawby, Augusta, a long-time advocate for agriculture and MBPN member. The NBA is a grassroots membership organization, established in 1994, committed to provide national leadership for the preservation of America's historic barns.

"This is a great tool for learning and a means of showcasing our rural heritage," said Charles Leik, NBA president. Teachers have commented on how students seize the task and demonstrate leadership qualities. "A barn-raising dovetails well with the U.S. history component of classroom studies and ties in math, physics, and the manual



Photo: Charles Leik

*This Hudson River Dutch barn is one of the two model barns being used to teach traditional construction and encourage barn preservation.*

arts," he said. Students as young as age nine have participated in model barn raisings. The NBA has available with the model, a complete 19th century history curriculum produced by an Iowa grant in 2007. Barn model plans are available for duplication.

"One of our hopes is that a young person working with the model will become inspired to make barn repair and restoration a career," said Donaldson. "There is a tremendous need for people who are knowledgeable about the construction of heritage barns to save them."

# Kansas Hosts 2010 National Barn Alliance Conference

The Kansas Barn Alliance and its cadre of hard-working members hosted the annual conference of the National Barn Alliance, June 10-12 in Atchison. The event featured presentations, hearty meals, entertainment, and a barn tour. Trillium Dell Timberworks, an Illinois firm, conducted a week-long barn repair training session in Doniphan County just prior to the conference.

Highlights of the conference attended by barn lovers representing eight states, included a kickoff barbeque at a hilltop barn near Atchison followed by an overview of the history of Doniphan and Atchison counties by Bill Noll of Highland Community College.

The June 11 sessions were opened by Marci Penner, co-founder of the Kansas Explorers, who outlined the importance of barn preservation to the health of rural communities. Giving old barns new work to do was the topic of a panel discussion by a producer of grass-fed swine, a Katahdin hair sheep breeder, a cheese maker and the owner of a meat processing plant. Dr. Darrin Rubino from Hanover College, Indiana, used core samples from heritage barns to demonstrate how the age of the wood in old structures can be determined.

Another conference feature was a presentation by Caitlyn Meives from the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office detailing Kansas' work to survey its barns (visit [www.KSHS.org/khri](http://www.KSHS.org/khri).) The



Photos: Toni Prawl, Kansas

KSHS website is user friendly and allows anyone to input historic data. Jan Jantzen, director for Rural Tourism Development, encouraged conference participants to consider agritourism as a new cash crop for farmers.

The barn tour used two school buses to transport barn-lovers around Atchison and Doniphan counties to visit seven barns, including the Staudenmaier Barn where the workshop took place. The barn had been raised and stabilized. The Blevins-Hale Mule Barn was the collection point for mules which were eventually sent to the U.S. Army at Fort Leavenworth and Fort Riley. The Tietjens Barn had two-foot thick stone walls and was built before 1861, the year Kansas became a state. A 58-foot octagon barn, built in 1914, was also on tour. It had been featured in a 1992 Budweiser commercial. Conferees were entertained by cowboy poet Ron Wilson ([www.ronscowboypoetry.com](http://www.ronscowboypoetry.com).)

Plans are under way for the 2011 annual conference of the National Barn Alliance to be held in the northeast. Check [www.nationalbarnalliance.com](http://www.nationalbarnalliance.com) for updates.

Sally Hatcher, president, Kansas Barn Alliance, MBPN member



## The Barnes Who Paint Barns

What are the chances of two people having the same last name of Barnes, meeting because of their mutual interest in barns, marrying, and starting a company to paint barns?

The MBPN hosted Tim and Christine Barnes, owners of Barn Painting & Advertising, Inc., East Berlin, Pennsylvania, and Eaton Rapids, Michigan, as 2010 conference presenters. Tim and Christine are not only the founders and owners of their company but they also supply almost all of the labor themselves. With a little prompting from Christine, Tim is quick to point out that "The best thing about this job is that I get to work with my wife every day."

Barn Painting & Advertising Inc. is a national company. The Barnes not only work together daily but also take up residence near every jobsite until the project is finished. They have also become skilled at sprucing up grain bins, silos, farm homes, and fences. Their commercial advertising promotes the preservation of entire farmsteads. (They are more tempted to take on farmstead projects if it means an extended stay in picturesque locations like Michigan's Northern Lower Peninsula.)

Listening to them speak it doesn't take long to realize that they see barn and farmstead painting as the surest way to save the build-

ings and rural character that they love. "Proper preparation, product selection and application of paint can be the best way to preserve historic structures" said Tim. Among key points the Barnes shared:

1. Proper preparation is critical: Make repairs, wash off any loose dirt, hand scrape chipped paint, treat areas showing signs of mildew
2. Select appropriate paint: Acrylic latex wears better and is more resistant to mildew than oil base paints; Elastomeric paints are available for metal roofing. Call Tim and Christine for recommendations on various brands.
3. Use the right equipment: Spray equipment and lifts are available to rent almost anywhere and will improve job quality and safety.

The Barnes' have nearly 100 painted barns to their credit and while they are always willing to provide a free, no-obligation quote they seem equally interested in passing along what they have learned to prospective "do-it-yourselfers." Visit their website [www.barnpaintadvertising.com](http://www.barnpaintadvertising.com).

Jon Noyes, Lansing, past board member



Photo: Jan Corey Arnett

*The Centennial Hansen Barn began as a log barn in the late 1800s. On-site excavation (foreground) has revealed pieces of history. The barn is now used to house family farm heirlooms and restored tractors.*



Photo: Julie Avery

*Tim Wiles, MBPN board member, lowers a wall plate into place as eager young assistants position the brace of a model timber-frame barn. Wiles demonstrated frame assembly at the Dale and Debbie Swanson Barn, part of the Barns & Byways Tour.*

## Barns & Byways Tour Draws Hundreds

The third annual Barns & Byways Tour, October 9 in Mason County's Victory Township was a first-class event attended by more than 400 people amid just-right autumn weather. Sponsored by the Ludington & Scottville area Chamber of Commerce, five centennial farm barns, a rural church, and a cemetery rich in history were tour stops. The

MBPN worked with local planners, offering demonstrations in rope-making, timber-frame construction, and barn-peg making at three of the stops. The MBPN board held its quarterly meeting October 8 in Ludington. For more information about the 2010 tour or plans for the 2011 event, contact the Chamber office at (231)845-0324.

## MBPN Presents Leveling and Sill Repair Workshop

On September 18th the Michigan Barn Preservation Network presented a barn leveling and sill replacement workshop at members Paula and Rick McCoy's farm in Vermontville. Steve Stier showed us how to find the high and low points of the barn using a laser level. This little piece of technology made the job relatively easy and efficient. After we all took turns marking the laser level lines on each base-ment post, we then measured the distance to the bottom of the upper floor. The difference between the two measurements shows which posts had settled and how much. Surprisingly, there was a five-inch difference throughout the barn, and even at each end of where the new sill would go.

Because jacking can be very dangerous, Steve showed us a proper way to jack up the floor system, which is exactly how Rick had done it. There are many issues of safety and everyone must keep them firmly in mind while jacking. Upstairs Steve showed us all different sizes of jacks and jacking methods and about the pros and cons of each. We then learned a way to jack up a post without setting a jack beneath it, which Rick had done to remove the old sill and to accept the new one. Now it was time to carry the very heavy new oak sills up the hill, which without a group effort would not have been possible. Still unsure which end of the barn was too high or low, we measured out where the sill's floor joist notches would have to go, and made calculations on the lap joints, that would connect the new with the old.

The group enjoyed a scrumptious lunch of three soups, biscuits, salsa, apple and blueberry crisps and ice cream. We ate so much that it took us a while to get back to work, but once we did we learned how to use traditional boring machines and chisels. We all tried our



Photo: Tammis Donaldson

*Steve Stier (front left) directs a team of workshop participants at the McCoy Barn, Vermontville, as they prepare to move a new sill to the barn for installation.*

hand at both while slowly chipping away at the sill. The lesson was concluded with instruction on how to properly sharpen chisels.

In the end, all of the floor joist notches had been roughed out on the sill, but the lap joints had yet to be cut. Discussions continued on how to solve the problem of the foundation being 5" out of level. All agreed that we'd love to come back for additional workshops on Rick's barn. Steve concluded by saying that the barn's 5" difference in level was a good lesson, showing that you always must measure for level because the naked eye cannot do it alone.

For more information on hosting a MBPN barn repair workshop, a barn tour, or an educational event relating to Michigan's traditional barns call Tammis Donaldson, Technical Committee chair at (248) 629-7428.

Stephanie White, Farmington Hills

## “Heritage Barns for the Next Generation” 2011 Conference to Have New Features

The 2011 annual conference is guaranteed to be a real barn-raiser. Quite literally. The 16th annual event held at Kellogg Center on the campus of Michigan State University, begins with a special pre-conference workshop, March 10, on agritourism. March 11 is tour



Photo: Vera Wiltse

day featuring barns in the Fowlerville and Howell area. March 12 is education day with sessions planned to help barn owners realize the treasure they have in a heritage barn and how to put it to best use. A model timber-frame barn, one of two traveling the country, will be raised. A model barn exhibit and competition will give craftspeople a chance to showcase their creativity and Barns of the Year will be honored.

The pre-conference workshop, “Agritourism: Your Next Cash Crop?” will be led by Jan Jantzen, director of Rural Tourism Development with Flint Hills Resource Conservation & Development, Emporia, Kansas. A speaker at the 2010 National Barn Alliance annual conference held in Kansas, Jantzen will help people interested in agritourism understand trends, risks, pricing and marketing.

Conferees will have the opportunity to help build a timber frame barn, using a model, one of the two commissioned by the National Barn Alliance through a grant underwritten by Russ Mawby, a longtime friend of the MBPN and agriculture. The model will be available for use in schools and at community events across the state over the next year.

More details for the 2011 conference will be made available on the [www.mibarn.net](http://www.mibarn.net) website as plans are finalized. Save the dates, nominate a barn for Barn of the Year, and build that model barn!

## Focusing Directions: 2011 and Beyond

The MBPN board, committee chairs and contracted partners met July 10th to conduct an annual review of the mission and directions of the organization. We reaffirmed that the established objectives and strategies remain important directions for MBPN. Priorities for attention were identified. In the original strategic planning (2008/2009) objectives were not prioritized. This time the group did prioritize its directions. They are: Education and Training, Networking and Funding and Membership. Two additional objectives, Communications and Operations, were moved lower in ranking because the group felt that strides had been made in accomplishing original goals.

The Board reaffirmed its interest in selecting Flagship Projects for organizational attention across the state. We identified the importance of pursuing partnerships for our conferences and activities and identifying new revenue-generating activities to sustain our work. We were challenged to begin looking at other nonprofits for models and examples of networking and fundraising.

Julie Avery, Meridian Township, MSU Museum partner and strategic planning facilitator



## Barn Lover Seeks Special Buyer for Property

**For sale: House, barn, outbuildings, and 2.8-acres, Durand, Michigan. \$119,000.**

Jack Swick, owner of this property, contacted the Michigan Barn Preservation Network because his hope is that someone who has a special fondness for heritage barns and farm homes will purchase his property. According to Mr. Swick, the barn is 45'x30' with hand-hewn beams and bark-covered logs inside. It was built around 1900 with a 20'x120' addition built in the 1950s or '60s.

The two-story house was built around 1900 and was remodeled in the 1970s with a circle drive and two-car garage added. There is also a pole building which is rented to a local farmer for storage as well as a silo.

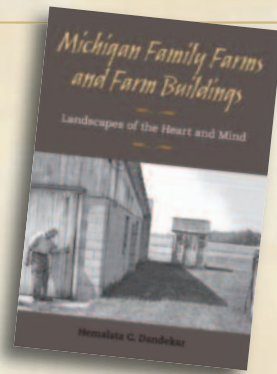
Says Mr. Swick, “We moved here in 1949 and farmed for many years, raising beef cattle. I am 87 years old and would like to sell with a life lease so I can live here the rest of my life. I want someone who is interested in barns to love this place.” The land around the Swick property is in active farming with no development interests. “It is a very good location on a small hill with a wonderful view,” he says.

For more information contact Mr. Swick directly at (989) 288-6512.

## Barratt Barn Begins Anew

The Barratt Pig Barn, a two-story structure built in 1947, which became part of the National Park Service in 2003 has been rebuilt this year from the foundation up. Located in the Port Oneida Rural Historic District in rural Leelanau County, a severe wind-storm in May 2009 twisted the upper portion of the barn so badly, the roof supports collapsed onto the loft floor. Volunteers, participants in a workshop supported by a \$250 grant from by the MBPN, and members of the Northwest Michigan Youth Corp rebuilt the structure in June. Grant dollars from other sources were also secured.

# Michigan Family Farms Book is a Keeper



Michigan's history with respect to lumbering and mining, the growth of the auto industry, famous builders, and Great Lakes shipping has been well-documented. Our lighthouses are legend. But there is an almost painful lack of material on the builders of agriculture and the barns at the heart of the farm enterprise.

This is why, the newly-released book, *Michigan Family Farms and Farm Buildings, Landscapes of the Heart and Mind*, by Hemalata C. Dandekar, (University of Michigan Press, 2010) is so important. Dandekar, a native of India, tells in extraordinarily rich, expressive, insightful, poetic, and sensitive detail, the stories of 15 Michigan farm families (8 in the UP, 7 in Lower Michigan). Dandekar says she felt a "compelling draw" to the farm landscape as a teenager in Michigan but it was not until she became a faculty member in UM's College of Architecture and Urban Planning that she immersed herself in visiting farms to document their histories. Her interviews overflow with data on barn sizes and herd sizes, acres and activities, crops and canning, births and deaths. The influence of politics, development, and social change, on farm health weaves throughout the telling, helping the reader internalize the realities of the farm family and community. Some farm families she first met in the 1980s she revisited in more recent years and illuminates what has transpired amid the passage of time. The stories are complemented by architectural drawings, photographs, wonderful quotes, and personal perceptions.

Dandekar says she hesitated to write these stories for fear that she "would fail to capture the indomitable sense of place, person, and values that became apparent as (she) talked to farm people...." She did not fail at all. She has contributed mightily to the documentation of Michigan's vital farm history and place. Those of us who love this life are most grateful.

For more information contact: University of Michigan Press, [www.press.umich.edu](http://www.press.umich.edu). Available as an e-book.

Jan Corey Arnett, Battle Creek, MBPN member



*Moving can be awkward when your "bones" are well over 100 years old.*

Photo: Janine Saputo

## It's All About Love For a Romeo Barn

Tom and Lori Brubaker of Bruce Township are pleased to announce a new/old addition to their property at 48065 Fisher Road north of 33 Mile Road. A 30' by 40' gable-roof barn has been moved intact about half a mile from a farmstead where it was no longer needed.

Lori Brubaker said she admired the barn every day on her way to and from work. A landscape designer, she is eager to add its authentic rural character to the Brubaker property.

The barn was built circa 1835 according to Romeo Historical Society curator Richard Beringer. Beringer researched the barn's characteristics to support comments made by local Amish men who had a close look at it as well. A farm at this township location is indicated on maps dating back to the 1850s and associated with the Isaac Taft family. Nearby Taft Road was once a boundary for Taft property.

The Brubakers hired C & A House Moving and Construction of Berville, a company with a long history of moving buildings intact. Les Young, a local stonemason, is redoing the stone façade on a new foundation. John White, a Romeo carpenter, is making structural repairs. Jonye Miller, an Amish builder, will repair and replace the framing elements.

The Romeo Historical Society (RHS) is pleased to see the Brubakers preserve an important piece of agricultural heritage in Bruce Township," said Beringer. "It is not every day a large building is preserved by moving it. Barns are a marvel of construction and functionality. This barn is an example of post and beam construction, with wooden pegs, and hand-hewn timbers."

Janine Saputo, Romeo, MBPN member.



P.O. Box 614  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804-0614

Fall 2010 - No. 56