



MI BARN

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



Barn Lovers: Join us at the 2022 Annual Conference and Member Meeting Returning to East Lansing on March 5th at MSU's Kellogg Center

At long last...we are pleased to announce that the MBPN will gather in person for an event next month!

The 2022 Annual Conference and Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 5th at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing, Michigan. The Kellogg Center's Lincoln Room will once again be the focal point of interesting and informative presentations and camaraderie among MBPN members from throughout the state. Current plans call for four presentations, a lively panel discussion, lunch, a live auction, and the presentation of the 2022 Barn of the Year Awards.

It's no secret that the past 18 months or so have been difficult; throughout Michigan, organizations like ours have struggled with challenges related to events, gatherings, and programs. Although—as described in previous issues of the newsletter—the MBPN has remained active on a variety of online and socially-distanced fronts, we all have missed the camaraderie that comes from gathering and exchanging ideas and stories related to our organizational mission.

With Omicron variant infection numbers apparently going

down and the percentages of individuals who are fully vaccinated increasing, it seems as if we may finally be “over the hump,” as it relates to getting back to a new normal. We apologize to our members for the delays in arranging what we hope will be a great kickoff to a year of renewed events designed to celebrate Michigan's barns and our rural heritage. Plans are being developed for a fall barn tour, but in the meantime, let's gather for our annual conference and member meeting. The tentative schedule for the day can be found on page 3.

MSU and Kellogg Conference Center protocols for meetings will be being followed, and tables will be arranged to promote social distancing. Per MSU guidelines, attendees will be required to wear masks except when eating and drinking.

A block of rooms is being held at the Kellogg Center, for those who wish to stay the night. We hope to see you on March 5th at this important membership event!

—Keith Kehlbeck, MBPN Communications Chair and Newsletter Editor

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Scan our QR code with your
smart phone and visit the
MBPN website!



President's Message

Volunteers are what make this organization succeed, and the MBPN is a case in point. In 1995, a group of volunteers started the Michigan Barn Preservation Network because they believed in saving our rural history. A very small number of these original volunteers are still active, either on our all-volunteer board of directors or helping with various projects. Most of us have less than ten years of experience with the MBPN, and we stand on the proverbial shoulders of those early proponents of barn preservation. We all owe those "founders" of the Network a great measure of thanks.



Tom Irrer

Volunteers have originated and continue to provide all of these services for MBPN:

- Provide barn news, information, articles, and photographs for our newsletter
- Organize our Annual Conference and Barn Tours
- Conduct our Barn of the Year program
- Produce our Barn Calendar
- Conduct our hands-on Barn School Program
- Deliver our Teamwork & Timbers trailer and educate using our model barn
- Continue to add to our Michigan Barn & Farmstead Survey
- Build our website and continue to keep it current
- Constantly update our online presence on Facebook and Instagram
- Coordinate all of these activities by our Board of Directors.

Our volunteers are a constantly revolving (and evolving) group. Many people realize that we have made Michigan better by "promoting the appreciation, preservation, and rehabilitation of Michigan barns, farmsteads, and rural communities"—our mission statement.

We are looking for a barn enthusiast to serve on the Board. The MBPN currently has a vacancy on its board of directors. If you would be willing to serve out the remaining year on a vacant board term, please let us know. Contact MBPN Nominations Chair at rademachersteve22@yahoo.com or by phone at (517) 202-1443 if you have questions.

—Tom Irrer, MBPN President

Calendar Update

This year, we printed 4,500 copies of the 2022 MBPN calendars, a very limited number of which remain available after distribution. The calendars have proven to be a wonderful marketing tool for the organization, and we appreciate all of the advertisers who helped offset the cost of the project. Thanks to Laura Braun for her oversight of the photo layout and narratives. She has been experimenting with a drone and camera to get special elevation barn photo shoots for future calendars.



—Jim Mulvany, Calendar Chair and Board Member

Tentative Schedule for the 2022 MBPN Annual Conference and Meeting

March 5, 2022

Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center, East Lansing, Michigan
Lincoln Room

- 8:30am Registration (Coffee and Donuts)
9:00am Membership Business Meeting
Endowment Update and Testimonial (Brad Brogen)

Past president Brad Brogen explains why the MBPN Endowment is so important...and how the Endowment Committee is working to build that legacy.

Michigan Barn and Farmstead Survey Update (Vera Wiltse)

For several years, MSU's MATRIX, the Center for Digital Humanities and Social Sciences has been developing and perfecting the new format for this index and documentation of Michigan's barns. A redesigned entry system will let individuals enter data on their own barns and regional project managers can directly enter data from township, county, and other geographical surveys. Hear from MBPN founding member Vera Wiltse how this program will work moving forward.

10:30am The Yellow Horse Barn Story (Perry Neumann and Tonya Boening)

A 2021 Barn of the Year Award winner, the Yellow Horse Barn is a special case. You can't help but love stories that begin with such phrases as "The barn was in rough shape," or it was a "lost cause," but continues with other phrases such as "a diamond in the rough," a "man who dreams big," and "he sees something that most people would consider a lost cause and sees the opportunity in it." Such is the story of the "Yellow Horse" Barn and the man behind its restoration, Perry Neuman, the father of the barn's current owners, Tonya and Gus Boening. Hear their story first-hand at this Keynote presentation.

11:30am Lunchtime for fun & networking

12:30pm MBPN Annual Auction Benefit

Williamston auctioneer Chuck Chestnut returns!
No silent auction this year.

This will be a juried auction with limited items. Interested in donating something for the auction? Contact Tom Irrer (tomirrer@mintcity.com) or (989) 640-1868

1:00pm Barn of the Year Presentations (Keith Anderson)

Our premier program, recognizing Michigan's exceptional barns... now in its 27th year! Meet the 2022 recipients and hear their stories.

2:00pm How to Organize a Barn Tour (panel: Ruth Stahl, Jana Bullock, Richard Beringer from the Romeo Historical Society)

Are you interested in hosting a barn tour in your area? Learn how from individuals who have successfully managed such tours. It can be done, even in challenging times! Last fall, the Romeo Historical Society had more than 100 people attend their tour. Find out from experience how effective and informative tours come together...



2:45pm Michigan's Dutch Barns (Steve Stier)

3:30pm "Can This Barn Be Saved?" (Clare Koenigsknecht)

The most frequently posed questions the Network receives may be inquiries from farmstead owners about the possibilities and challenges of saving a barn on their properties. MBPN Treasurer and past president Clare Koenigsknecht explains how the Network helps evaluate and direct barn lovers in this crucial aspect of our mission.

4:30pm Adjournment

Kellogg Center Housing

Call 800-875-5090 and inquire concerning *Block Name: MI Barn Preservation.*



Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

Number of Attendees _____
(\$60 per member, \$100 non-member)

Dietary Restrictions? _____

Please mail registrations
(must be received by February 22nd) to:

MBPN
PO Box 614
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804-0614.

Checks should be payable to MBPN. Registrations may also be made on our website, www.mibarn.net (using PayPal).

2022 Barn of the Year Applications are Being Evaluated

The three-month period for receiving applications for this year's Barn of the Year award was opened on November 1st and ended on January 31st. We are pleased to announce that, once again, we have received multiple nominations of exceptional Michigan barns. The locations of this year's nominations range throughout the Lower Peninsula, from the west to the east sides of the state. Among those counties represented are Oakland, Lenawee, Ogemaw, Midland, Macomb, Berrien, Manistee, Kent, Cheboygan, and Bay Counties.

The Barn of the Year Committee (made up of eight individuals) will evaluate the applications and determine awards during the month of February, with the expectation of presenting the Awards at the Annual Conference on March 5th in East Lansing. The owners and families of the recipients are invited to attend the conference.

We are particularly excited this year to be returning to Kellogg Center for the awards presentations. While there was a lot to like about taking our awards 'on the road' last year and presenting at the site of the barns themselves—such as local interest, local media, meeting some nice people and seeing some nice barns—the greatest exposure for the Network and the recipients comes with presenting the awards before the largest audience we can muster, which in our case is at the annual conference. It also brings the barn owners before a crowd for recognition.

This year's awards may represent a notable milestone. In the 27 years since the MBPN has presented Barn of the Year recognition, 95 barns have received the honor. *Could this year mark the 100th barn so recognized?* Join us at the Kellogg Center to find out!

—Keith Anderson, MBPN Awards Committee Chair

Barn of the Year Q & A

Everything you ever wanted to know about Barn of the Year, but were afraid to ask....

What is the Barn of the Year?

The *Barn of the Year* Program annually honors Michigan barns that exemplify outstanding character in our state and serve as prime examples of preservation. As we know, barns throughout Michigan and the whole U.S. are rapidly disappearing. With few incentives to maintain and restore historic barns, and little public awareness of the importance of preserving these irreplaceable and culturally significant artifacts, the history of our rural heritage is at risk of being lost and forgotten.

The *Barn of the Year Award* seeks to capture the public's attention by recognizing barns that have been saved and inspire others to become barn stewards.

Nominations are open to the public, reviewed and determined by MBPN Awards Committee members and awarded to the barn owners at the MBPN Annual Conference, this year held late winter in East Lansing.

How long has the program existed?

The first Barn of the Year Award was presented in 1996. This year is the 27th Year that one or more barns have received the coveted award. A total of 95 barns have received the designation.

In what categories may barns be nominated?

For purposes of evaluating barns nominated for the award, barns may either be continued in use for Agriculture, or they may be Adapted for other uses. Among these two broad categories, their ownership may be further classified as either Private/Family, Commercial or Non-Profit.

What are the criteria on which barns are evaluated for the Award?

- Visual Appeal—How good does it look? How does it photograph?
- Integrity—Has the original integrity and materials of the barn been preserved?
- Uniqueness—Is there something distinctive about the age, size, design or architecture?
- Effort of Rehabilitation—How heroic was the work to save, restore and preserve it?
- Thoroughness of Rehabilitation—Is the rehabilitation and restoration complete or needing more attention?
- Creativity of Rehabilitation—How creative were the rehab steps taken in solving the barn's problems? How creative is the purpose for which it is now used?

- Merit—Extra points—Quality and completeness of the application? Something truly outstanding or unusual not accounted for in the other evaluation points?

Who judges which nominees are awarded?

The *2022 Awards Committee* is seven members of MBPN with diverse skills, all having a passion for the MBPN's mission of preserving barns:

- Mara Lancaster, Architect
- Tom Nehil, Architect and Past Chairman
- Ina Hanel-Gerdenich, Architectural Historian
- Keith Kehlbeck, Board Member, Newsletter Editor
- Rose Putnam, Early Board Member and Barn Preservation Activist
- Nichole VanBlaricum, MBPN's Board Secretary
- Keith Anderson, Board Member, Chairman

How is the program announced to the public?

The MBPN Fall Quarterly Newsletter, as well as its website mibarn.net, its email communication E-News, social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram, all announce the opening of a new round of nominations. In addition, a Press Release is sent out for publication through regional and local newspapers, farm magazines and broadcasts by select radio stations.

When are nominations accepted?

Nominations may be submitted during the 90-day period beginning November 1st this past Fall and continuing until late January 2022.

What happens if a nominated barn is not selected to receive an award?

Frankly, competition for the award is normally stiff, and generally only one award is given in each category. All nominations are considered winners, however, because their existence shows there are preservationists in Michigan working hard to save our rural structures and their heritage. Whether selected or not, owners should take pride in their preserved barn. All applicants receive a one-year membership to MBPN as well as complimentary passes to the annual conference, at which time they are recognized with a Certificate of Appreciation as Great Barns of Michigan. Barns are eligible to be re-nominated any succeeding year.

Which barns have received the award in the past?

The MBPN Website, mibarn.net, has a complete list of the 95 Barn of the Year Awardees from the past quarter of a century, complete with photos and locations. Go to the website and click on the Barn of the Year tab.



Memberships Make the Network Run...



It's no secret that the success of any organization depends on its members (and, as MBPN President Tom Irrer notes elsewhere in this newsletter, its volunteers). The MBPN is no exception.

Each year, we ask that our existing members renew their memberships, and we encourage new barn enthusiasts to join our ranks. In the previous newsletter, we included information on how to renew your membership for a new year. Our website (www.mibarn.net) and our 2022 calendars also include that information, which is reproduced below.

We also should provide a shout-out to our Cupola Members—a growing number of MBPN members who support our activities and

our endowment with a \$1,000 donation to the organization. The list at the bottom of the page represents those who have generously provided such support. We are grateful for their commitment to our organization, and we hope others will join them.

Many of you have taken the opportunity to support the Network during challenging Covid times, and we greatly appreciate that support. If you haven't yet renewed your membership, we hope that you will take this opportunity to do so...or to enhance your support with an additional donation of any size. Thank you in advance and for making our efforts and mission-fulfilment possible.

—Vera Wiltse, MBPN Membership and Program Chair

Membership Form

Join us — with this form, or on-line at mbarn.net

Contact us through the website mbarn.net or call 517 648 2933, or any board Company or Non-profit Name

Fieldstone	Annual/one person	\$40	\$ _____
Mortar	Annual/two people	\$50	\$ _____
Cupola	Lifetime/two people	\$1000	\$ _____
Other Donation			\$ _____

Non-profit Affiliate
Annual/two representatives, website listing \$50 \$ _____

Contractor/Business
Annual/two representatives, website listing \$100 \$ _____

To contact any board member, visit www.mibarn.net for a listing of names and phone numbers. A copy of the newsletter may also be requested from any board member.

Membership Names

Check enclosed for \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (____) _____ Email _____

Send form and check or money order to:

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



Endowment Update



About 2007, our Board of Directors first talked about establishing an endowment. In the spring of 2018, we took that initial step with an investment of \$25,000 placed with the Capital Region Community Foundation. Since that time, contributions from board members and other MBPN members, investment appreciation, and earnings have brought this fund up to more than \$110,000!

In these early years of our endowment, our Board has opted not to take any withdrawals, but instead has decided to let our investment grow. Prudently managed, money contributed to our endowment can ultimately provide funds to the Michigan Barn Preservation Network in perpetuity.

After establishing our endowment, we did a feasibility study about conducting a major campaign to dramatically build our endowment's principal sum. Then the onset of Covid-19—and now the Omicron Variant—have caused us to be hesitant about starting a major campaign, but we are planning behind the scenes to unveil a major pledge drive later this year. Our goal is ambitious, and we need everyone's help to "preserve our heritage and invest in our future." Join us in Lansing on March 5th to hear additional updates and testimonials regarding the endowment effort.

—Julie Avery, MBPN Vice President and Endowment Committee

MBPN Cupola Lifetime Members

Keith & Linda Anderson	Robert & Nancy Plummer
Jan Corey & Doyle Arnett	Linda Pung
Brad & Linda Brogren	Deborah Remer
Dan and Jean Creyts	Thelma Riehle
Michael & Diana Dalton	Alice Robinson & William
Gerald & Marcia Danner	Kimball
Leo Fitzpatrick & Judy Grant	Garrick & Fran Rollert
Robert & Debra Foti	Jeanette Routhier & Jim
Jim & Ann Freiburger	Bowes
Richard Harvey & Marcia Calkin	Chuck and Janine Saputo
Charlene & Royal Heins	Ivan & Ruth Stahl
Tom & Marilyn Irrer	Steve Stier & Julie Avery
Keith Kehlbeck & Ali Webb	Noel & Sandy Stuckman
Clare & Judy Koenigs knecht	Rex & Ginny Tefertiller
Ronald Kuhl	Bob & Sally Wiles
Linda & Richard Mueller	Vera Wiltse
Jeff & Cindy Nussdorfer	Barb & Jack Worthington

MBPN Board Meets in Person at Historic “Fire Barn”

On January 22nd, the MBPN board did something it hadn't been able to do in recent months: meet in person. With the help of Keith and Linda Anderson, the board meeting took place in a unique setting—a renovated firehouse. The story of Fire "Barn" Number 3, the site of MBPN's quarterly board meeting, is a unique one.

According to information provided by Kindsvatter, Dalling and Associates (the developer and current tenant), the firehouse has stood at 629 West Hillsdale since at least 1914. From the beginning, it was a favorite firehouse of firefighters and Lansing residents for its location, close to I-496 as well as being close to a number of populated neighborhoods in the area. Its fire trucks were often dispatched with other fire stations because of its central and convenient location. Rebuilt in 1953 to make it up to date, efficient and able to support larger fire equipment, it remained a beloved building by the firefighters who worked and lived here. The first level had a dispatch, kitchen and a bay for two fire trucks. Upstairs housed beds and showers for the firefighters, always on call and ready to respond.

As time went on and firefighting and emergency response started to look different in Lansing, the city was determined to decommission stations in Lansing and consolidate. Unfortunately, Fire Station Number 3 needed \$50,000 in costly roof repairs. The city felt that more money should be put into the large fire station in downtown Lansing near the capitol. The City put Fire Station Number 3 up for sale along with two other stations. The Dallings started looking at the building in 2013 for a new home for their lobbying and association management firm. Taking on the building would be very costly. Besides roofing issues, it required asbestos removal, environmental cleanup, and costly heating and cooling updates.

Derek and Erin Dalling worked with the city of Lansing and the state of Michigan to obtain tax credits to help with refurbishment. After 2 years of negotiations, the building was obtained by DED Development in 2017 for the construction of the new home for Kindsvatter, Dalling and Associates. Construction by John Mitchell Builders took less than one year and in 2018 KDA moved into Fire Station Number 3, giving new life to an old building and a neighborhood needing business. Firefighters still stop by to check on their old home, telling us that even though the roof leaked for years, this is still the best place they ever worked.

For the MBPN board, the Firehouse proved the perfect, centrally-located gathering place for the first in-person meeting in many months (due to the pandemic). In a lively, half-day meeting, the board made plans for the coming year (including the upcoming Annual

Meeting), reaffirmed progress on the Endowment, membership, technical matters, and communications. We look forward to a productive and successful year—with, we hope, many more in-person opportunities for networking and collaboration.

—Keith Kehlbeck, Communications Chair and Newsletter Editor



The original Fire House, circa 1920



Firehouse Number 3 rebuilt at the same location in 1953.



The MBPN Board hard at work

Photo by Keith Kehlbeck



Photos courtesy of Kindsvatter, Dalling & Associates

Today's Fire Station Number 3, home of Kindsvatter, Dalling & Associates



James Schettek (grandson of the original barn builder), owner of David Webster Construction LLC stands beside the reconstructed cupola for the barn, built by his company. The cupola is planned to be installed on the barn within the next few weeks.



Steve Stier with the partially completed cupola. *Photos by Steve Stier*

Grant Helps Leelanau County Poor Farm Barn Get a New Cupola

The Leelanau County Historic Preservation Society recently announced that they have received a generous grant from the Edmund F. and Virginia B. Ball Foundation. The Ball family's commitment to making a difference in the nonprofit world, in this case Leelanau County, which they consider a second home, will have a significant architectural effect on the appearance of the County Poor Farm Barn in Myles Kimmerly Park. The funding will directly support the restoration of specific architectural elements.

This Ball Foundation grant enables the Leelanau County Historic Preservation Society to replicate two of the original features of the County Poor Farm Barn which have been missing for more than sixty years: the unique cupola and the shed roof, both part of the original design by Traverse City architect Jens C. Petersen. These elements will complement the now rehabilitated barn, giving it more visibility for the interpretation of their original functions. The barn is unique because it was designed by an architect, whereas most barns were constructed by barn builders without architectural plans.

As indicated in earlier newsletters (and in the 2021 Barn of the Year Award received by the Poor Farm Barn), the Leelanau County Poor Farm Barn, the only remaining structure of the poor farm, is the iconic symbol of an era of caring by giving a home and purpose to the more destitute of the county. The MBPN and the Leelanau County Historic Preservation Society are looking for



Leelanau County Poor Farm Barn 1911. Builder John Schettek in foreground. The original cupola and shed roof (just visible at lower right in photo) were removed at an unknown date. A generous grant from the Ball Foundation will fund reconstruction of both the cupola and the shed roof on the lower west wall.

ward to the cupola and shed roof installations in 2022 and the Society will celebrate with an annual fundraising event.

—Steve Stier, Technical Chair and Past President



**MICHIGAN
BARN
PRESERVATION
NETWORK**

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

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www.mibarn.net

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This old carriage barn is the highlight of Main Street through Manchester, Michigan. It is surprising what one barn can do to brighten a city's visual image. There are many old carriage barns in every Michigan town. What can we do to encourage the preservation of these old barns?

Photo by Jim Mulvany