



Quilt patterns are painted on 8 by 8-ft. squares of plywood that mount on the side of barns. "You can't put kids up high on barns," says Kevin Peyton. "By building and painting the squares on the ground, you can get a lot more youth groups involved."

Barn Quilt Squares Catch On

Painting quilt squares on barns started in Ohio, then spread to Tennessee, Kentucky and Iowa. When Kevin Peyton first heard about the idea, he decided to develop the idea in his home area, Sac County, Iowa. What started out as a 4-H leadership project has taken on a life of its own.

"Our original goal was 10 barns, but we are up to 17 with five more ready to be installed on barns," says Peyton. "The whole county has gotten involved. We have had adult and youth groups, art classes and ag classes painting squares. FFA chapters helped build the frames."

Eligible barns are on blacktop roads for ease of access and should be at least 50 years old to emphasize the county's agricultural heritage. Unlike some communities where the quilt patterns are painted on the barns themselves, these are painted on 8 by 8-ft. squares of plywood that are later attached to barns.

"You can't put kids up high on barns," says Peyton. "By building and painting the squares on the ground, you get a lot more youth groups involved."

Initial funding came from the Sac County Farm Bureau, local individuals and businesses. As the project progressed, barn owners have gotten involved to help fund it.

Peyton's end goal is to have a barn with a

quilt square close to every town in the county. He hopes the increased tourist traffic to view the artwork will result in increased business for town shops and cafes. So far the quilt square barn route covers 108 miles of hard surface roads. While there is no way to tell how many people have traveled the route, numbers are growing.

"We have had a lot of barn owners tell about people pulling in and taking pictures," says Peyton.

Whether or not the county sees an increase in business, Peyton feels the project has been worthwhile. "The project has really brought a sense of unity to a lot of people involved," he says. "Our biggest problem so far has been that everybody wants a barn quilt."

Peyton is using GPS and other software to make maps of where the squares are. He has also produced a CD that tourists can buy or rent to tell them about the county, the barns with squares and other places of interest. The county plans to produce brochures about the quilt squares to promote agriculture and the county.

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How To Make An Emergency Toilet

By C.F. Marley, Contributing Editor

Here's a way to make an inexpensive portable toilet if your plumbing ever goes out.

All you need is a few plastic 5-gal. buckets, a toilet seat, 6 eye screws and 6 stove bolts.

First, saw the top 4 to 6 inches off the first bucket and discard the rest.

Space the eye screws around the bottom of the toilet seat inside where the top half of the bucket will go. Drill holes to match where the eye screws are in the top part of the bucket and put the stove bolts through the eye screws and bucket to hold everything together.

Now, simply slip the modified toilet seat into the top of the other bucket.

Sprinkle kitty litter or sawdust into the bucket after each use and discard the waste when the "toilet" is full.

You need two plastic 5-gal. buckets, a toilet seat, 6 eye screws and 6 stove bolts to make Marley's toilet.



"Lawn Chair On Wheels" Helps The World's Poorest

You won't find a worthier cause to donate money to than the Free Wheelchair Mission which we first read about in a recent Reader's Digest article.

During a trip to Morocco, Don Schoendorfer and his wife saw a disabled woman dragging herself across a road. After looking into it, they learned that in the poorest countries of the world, disabled people are lower on the food chain than beggars.

"The sight of people crawling just really stuck with him," says Johnathan Abramson, marketing coordinator for the Free Wheelchair Mission. "With his talent for building things, he figured he could do something to help."

In 1999, Shoendorfer created his first wheelchairs in his garage made from cheap plastic lawn chairs. He added inexpensive 24-in. mountain bike wheels with hand rims and 8-in. castor wheels for the front. A steel brace fits around the lawn chair and there's a simple footrest on front.

Now, the wheelchair parts are made in China. It costs \$34 to manufacture. With shipping the total comes to \$41.17 per chair.

So far, the mission has delivered more than 77,000 free wheelchairs and has a goal to deliver 20 million by 2010.

Yet, with more than 100 million disabled poor in developing countries, the mission will still have a lot of work left to do.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, (Donations Only) The Free Wheelchair Mission, P.O. Box 513538, Los Angeles, Calif. 90051 or The Free Wheelchair Mission, 3100 Airway Avenue, Suite 115, Costa Mesa, Calif. 92626 (ph 800 733-0858 or 714 708-2100; fax 714 708-2500; involve@freewheelchairmission.org; www.freewheelchairmission.org).

In the poorest countries, disabled people are lower on the food chain than beggars. Schoendorfer's free wheelchairs change their lives forever.



It costs just \$41.17 a piece to make and ship the low-cost wheelchairs.



Adopt-A-Cow Service Boosts Income

Stan and Betty Dobrovoly of Atkinson, Nebraska are trying a new approach to boost income on their 1,000-cow cattle ranch. They've started what they call "Dub's Adopt-a-Cow."

They started the venture in October, 2004. "We got the idea from a guest who was staying at the hunting lodge we operate on our ranch. He asked if he could adopt a cow from us and a light came on for me," Stan Dobrovoly says. "We worked out an arrangement that we were both happy with."

That first customer was Paul Berger of Boca Raton, Florida. "We have a lot of cow stuff in our house, so everybody knows that I love cows," Berger explains. "My whole life, I've wanted a pet cow. The one I adopted is actually still a calf, and I named her Bessie."

It happens that Berger travels a lot for business, so visiting the ranch once a year isn't a big problem. "She costs me less than my dog does every year. My friends will go play 3 rounds of golf for the same cost as having a cow so, as far as I'm concerned, it's not a big deal. My wife and I plan to visit Bessie this summer."

According to Dobrovoly, the adoptive "parents" have total ownership of the cows and "can come and take the animal from the ranch" if they decide to.

They may even chose to have a GPS locator installed on the cow which they can check from satellite anywhere in the world at any time, to show their friends where their cow

is grazing.

The adoption fee is \$1,000 plus a \$500 per year fee for upkeep. Or clients can pay \$7,500 up front, which will go into an escrow account to pay all fees for the life of the cow.

The adoptive owner receives registration and birth certificates suitable for framing, issued by Dubs Adopt-a-Cow. Failure to make the support payment within 60 days of the due date will result in the adoptive owner having all rights severed.

"So far, I haven't spent much time promoting the service other than our website, but I do think there are several thousand people out there with the money and desire to adopt a cow. Marketed correctly, there would be those who consider it to be a token amount. It is the wealthy elite who have a different perception of things than the rest of us," Dobrovoly says. "I've read about people who will spend \$8,500 dollars on their 6 yr. old's birthday party. Lots of people donate tens of thousands of dollars to PETA, where most of the money is going towards public relations and making a lot people rich. I'm inviting those people to put their money where their mouth is and actually take a cow out of production."

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