

Save the Barn Committee – Recognition

On a snowy day in 2012, Phyllis Marks took pictures of the two barns on the LaPorte County Home property west of town on Highway 2. The barns appeared aging and clearly needed repair.

County Recorder, Barbara Dean and her office staff were asked to assist in researching the historical information of the barns. It was found that the Barns were built in 1915 by the LaPorte County Commissioners.

In January of 2013, Phyllis gathered a small group of concerned citizens and historians and formed a committee to begin studying the condition of the barns. It was determined that only one Barn could be saved, and that was the Dairy Barn. The committee decided to pursue the restoration of Dairy Barn. That Committee became known as “Friends of the Barn”.

The “Friends of the Barn” approached then LaPorte County Board of Commissioners, David Decker, Dr. Vidya Kora and Willie Milsap, and received approval for the Committee to approach the LaPorte County Council for funding, but only for Roof Repair, which would save the Dairy Barn from further interior damage. The then LaPorte County Council, consisting of Lois Sosinski, Mark Yagelski, Terry Garner, Rich Mrozinski, Jeff Santana, Earl Cunningham and Matt Bernacchi, approved the funding for the Roof Repairs. Any other restoration or repair work that the Committee wanted to see done would have to be accomplished with funds raised by Phyllis and her small committee.

“Friends of the Barn” would like to thank all of the members of both the LaPorte County Commission and LaPorte County Council that we just mentioned. Special thanks to then LaPorte County Council Member Lois Sosinski, who was instrumental with her advice and guidance as to the mechanics of “fund depositing” and as acting liaison with the Barn Committee.

In 2016 the outside of the Barn was finished, being restored to its original red color and standing tall; a welcome to all enter our community from the West.

The “Friends of the Barn” Committee raised over \$20,000.00 from several sources.

The Committee itself had a booth at the LaPorte County Fair, which both raised funds and awareness of the Barn Project.

There are so many people and organizations that "Friends of the Barn" would like to thank, so, let's begin by thanking:

Reminisce Magazine, a national magazine, that ran the story on the "Save the Barn:" Committee and their mission to save the Dairy Barn, which brought in dozens of donations from all over the country.

People Engaged in Preservation "PEP", our local historical preservation group led by Tim Stabosz

The Questor's Club a club dedicated to preservation of historical objects.

The LaPorte County Maintenance Team, led by Jerry Cooley.

Jodi Rose and Rose Brothers & Sons for their expertise in Painting the Dairy Barn.

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Tonight, we are here to honor and give recognition to the core group of "Friends of the Barn".

Because of their dedication to LaPorte County History, and the Dairy Barn, they donated their Time, Talents, and Treasures to complete the project bringing the Dairy Barn back to its "Glory Days".

The following is a listing of Phyllis' committee or "Friends of the Barn" members. When I read your names, please come up to the front so that "Friends of the Barn" can be recognized.

Phyllis Marks

Bob Carpenter

Steve Jensen

Dick Reel

John Leinweber

Tim Stabosz

