



# Barn Quilts: A Secret Treasure in the Midwest



If you've ever driven through the countryside in Iowa you may have noticed the beautifully painted bright and vivid patterns displayed on barns and buildings. These picturesque works of art are known as barn quilts. Barn quilts originated in 2001 about 900 miles away from here in Adams County, Ohio, when Donna Sue Groves wanted to honor her mother's Appalachian heritage by hanging a painted quilt on her barn. She gained support from other barn owners and with the help of volunteers created several paintings to formulate a barn quilt trail for visitors to enjoy. The concept quickly spread to other states, with barn quilts now located in over half of the United States.

South Dakota and Nebraska are now included on the list of states with barn quilts. Within a 50 mile radius of Yankton you can find approximately 100 of these works of art, one of our little known treasures of this area. Who's keeping track? Well, Ranah Sample is helping keep tabs on barn quilts in her area. Sample grew up in

Northfield, MN and moved to Vermillion with her husband Jim in 1977. Sample and Jim raised two daughters, one now resides in Rapid City and one in Platte. These two daughters have blessed them with three grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

Putting forty-three years into her career in education, Sample was a Guidance Counselor in Centerville, SD followed by a Special Needs At-Risk Counselor and the past 23 years she was the school Psychologist at the Southeast Area Cooperative based in Beresford. Sample told me that she had recently retired. "One year ago today, in fact," she said with a big grin. Myself, having plenty of years in front of me before retirement, could only guess at the sense of excitement and satisfaction she was feeling.

The Samples' first experience with barn quilts came when they visited the Sac County, Iowa "Quilt-A-Fair" in 2009 to view the local barn quilts and cloth quilts created by their local talent.

*We refuse to...  
Give up  
our swing*

**Peloton**  
Physical Therapy

Morgen Square  
605.260.5003