



INTRODUCTION

About the Barn Quilt Project

Based on similar projects in North Carolina and in neighboring states, the Watauga County Arts Council is launching its own version of the Quilt Trails Project which, along with a similar project in Avery county, will link quilt trails already under development in Madison, Yancey, Mitchell, and Ashe counties.

Quilts, always a beloved symbol of comfort, family, heritage, and community, will provide new splashes of color along the roadsides and into the rural countryside. Vibrant quilt patterns will be painted on pre-built eight foot wooden squares. They are to be installed on barns, public buildings, shops, and other appropriate buildings around the community. A series of self-guided trails maps will be developed to direct sight-seers along the highways and byways to view these icons of tradition in their new and significant role as public art.

Grant funds from The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area and coordinated through HandMade in America will provide supplies for the first several quilts. In Watauga County, Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation has agreed to sponsor the project by assisting with “hanging” the quilt squares on the barns.

Often referred to as Barn Quilts (because the concept originated with barns in Midwestern states and still focuses primarily on barns despite the more recent inclusion of other hanging sites), each quilt square will require a team of volunteer painters and a willing property owner to donate hanging space on their building. Making a quilt square together will allow volunteer groups from community centers, churches, school classes, and even families the opportunity to create and paint their own quilt square as a group project. The square which is chosen may represent a family pattern from a beloved quilt or perhaps something new.

Taking part in the Barn Quilt Project will allow individuals, community centers, churches, school classes, and other groups to create and paint their own personal quilt square. The Watauga County Arts Council will have a number of designs and colors from which to choose.

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From design and artist selection to installation, each Barn Quilt has an estimated value of approximately \$500.00. The first \$2,000 in funding for this project has been provided through and will purchase materials and supplies. Once these funds are depleted, the Arts Council will seek ways to help fund other quilts on a more extended basis.

The Arts Council will be happy to work with individuals or groups who are not part of this first tier of funding if they desire to create their own Barn Quilt. We ask that all sites make a commitment for the Barn Quilt to remain in place for at least two years. These quilt squares are a wonderful way to celebrate our local heritage, as well as a unique regional art project that crosses county lines.



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