



## The Highland County Barn Quilt Trail

Discover over 50 unique and colorful wooden quilt blocks and their stories on Virginia's first barn quilt trail



Can you spot them all?



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### Tradition uniquely displayed


You may have spotted those colorful painted wooden squares and diamonds hanging on barns and homes, but do you know their story? These unique works of art are barn quilts! Barn quilts are the merger of traditional roles on the farm, blending the customs of quilting bees together with outdoor barn work into a beautiful combination.

Barn quilt trails have sprung up since the 2000s, having begun in Adams County, Ohio. The Highland County Barn Quilt Trail is the first in Virginia and has been highlighted in the book, "Following the Barn Quilt Trail", by Suzi Parron, the authority on barn quilt trails. Highland's trail began in 2011 when Carolyn Pohowsky, the Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, saw several barn quilts that local artist Margie Boesch had painted for the barns on the farm that she and her husband Mike own. Recognizing the importance of highlighting the rural heritage, the significance of the barns in Highland County, and the stories of the people who live here, Carolyn put together a brochure that contained 13 barn quilts. Since then, the trail has grown! There are at least 60 barn quilts throughout the county, some of which are only visible to the owners of the properties and not highlighted here.

Barn quilts have names, and there is often a story about the owner of the barn or outbuilding on which the barn quilt is affixed. How does someone choose a design or pattern? A quilt the owner has made could be inspiration for the barn quilt. The pattern could represent a plant the owner enjoys or the appreciation of a type of animal, bird or other natural wonder. The barn quilt may even tell you about a business. Some of them contain a pattern that just hit the right spot in the heart of the owner. Learn more about the history and inspiration of the local barn quilts as you read through the brochure.

When you follow the Highland County Barn Quilt Trail, you'll wind your way through our back roads with a purpose and a question: "What's the story behind that barn quilt?" Enjoy the beauty of our hills, hollows, fields and forests, as well as those intriguing stories of the people who are part of this community. Happy trails!


Photos courtesy Margie Boesch, David Cockerham, Carolyn Kenec, Mark Swecker, the Highland County Chamber of Commerce, and owners of the barn quilts. Special thanks to barn quilt owners, Margie Boesch, Carolyn Pohowsky, Mark and Cindy Swecker, Karen Sweeney, Mid Valley Press and the Virginia Tourism Corporation.


**1. Five Reds**  
Located at 1240 Little Egypt Road (Rt. 604), 1.2 miles south of Valley Center Rd. (Rt. 604) on a gravel road. This barn quilt received its name because there are five redheads in the family. The farm is also named "Five Reds." Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



**2. Birds in the Air**  
2028 Valley Center Rd. (west side of Rt. 604), 2 miles south of Rt. 84 intersection "Birds in the Air" is a traditional pattern. Its triangles represent birds flying home, and it was chosen to honor George Bird. Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



**3. Blazing Star**  
Located at 9581 Upper Back Creek Rd. (east side of Rt. 600), 2.1 miles north of the intersection with Rt. 84 "Blazing Star" is a traditional pattern, and this quilt was a Valentine's gift. Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



**4. Back Creek Farms**  
Located at 7781 Upper Back Creek Rd. (east side of Rt. 600), 3.5 miles north of the intersection with Rt. 84 Barn quilt designed by Christina Kerns, painted by Margie Boesch, and maple leaf painted by Pat and Valerie Lowry



**5. Tree of Paradise**  
Located at 42 Dove Lane (southeast side of Rt. 84) "Tree of Paradise" is a variation of a traditional pattern, and it has Biblical significance important to the owners. Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



**6. Ethiopian Cross**  
Located at 3607 Mill Gap Rd. (southeast side of Rt. 84 next to Dove Lane) The owners have a close relationship with SW Ethiopians, and inspiration came from Ethiopian embroidery. Barn quilt inspired by Mary Lou Cox and designed and painted by Margie Boesch




**7. Boyer Hill**  
Located at a home on the hill at 1823 Mill Gap Rd. (southeast side of Rt. 84) at the top peak of the detached garage. Please do not drive up the private lane for a closer view. Barn quilt designed by Somers Stephenson and painted by Margie Boesch



**8. Turkey Tracks**  
Located on the east side of Meadowdale Rd. (Rt. 640), 1.2 miles from the intersection with Rt. 84 Margie's husband Mike looks for wildlife on the farm, hence this traditional pattern. Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



**9. Autumn Splendor**  
Located at 2806 Meadowdale Rd. (west side of Rt. 640), 1.6 miles from the intersection with Rt. 84 Adorned at Margie Boesch's Highland Barn Quilts Studio, this design came about as Margie was looking at an unusual maple leaf. Maple syrup used to be made in the current studio, and sugar maple trees still reside nearby. The old "Maple Leaf" design was replaced in 2020 with "Autumn Splendor," a loving tribute to the maple trees that provide shade, syrup and entrance to the land in Highland County. Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



**10. Mountain Star**  
Located at 2806 Meadowdale Rd. (west side of Rt. 640), 1.6 miles from the intersection with Rt. 84 This quilt provides a bright entrance to the Highland Barn Quilts Studio. Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



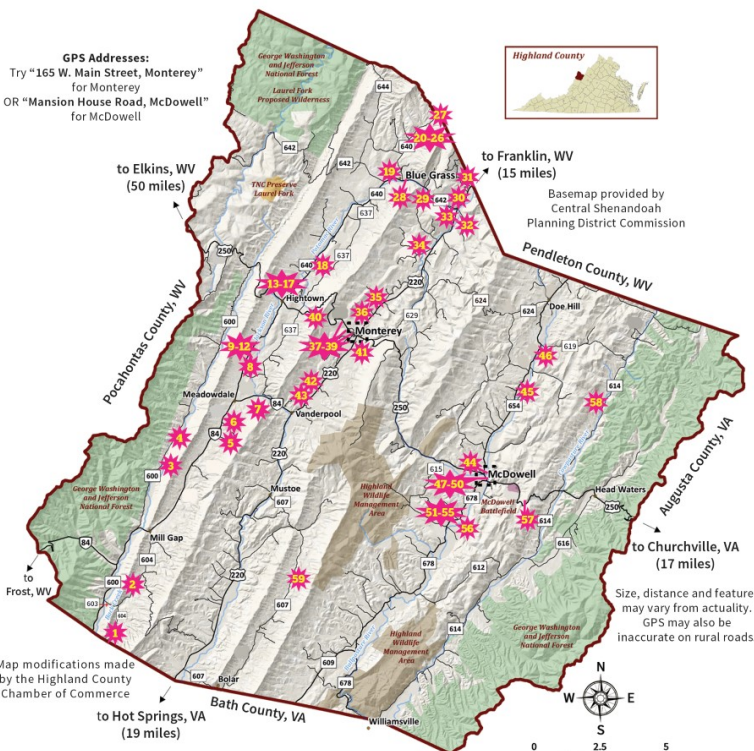
**11. Sunset Star**  
Located on the west side of Meadowdale Rd. (Rt. 640), 1.6 miles from the intersection with Rt. 84 One of Margie Boesch's first quilts was a "Storm at Sea" pattern that she renamed "Sunset Sea." It was the Rhode Island winner of Good Housekeeping Magazine's Great Quilts of America Contest in 1978. This barn quilt pays tribute to Margie's 1978 original quilt. Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



**12. Spanish Tile**  
Located on the west side of Meadowdale Rd. (Rt. 640), 1.9 miles from the intersection with Rt. 84 Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



**13. Jacob's Ladder**  
Located at 5573 Mountain Turnpike (north side of Rt. 250), 0.1 miles west of the intersection with Rt. 640 This pattern was chosen in honor of the late Jacob Hevener, owner of Dividing Waters Farm, a Hightown landmark. The traditional pattern refers to Jacob in the Bible who dreamed of angels ascending and descending on a ladder to heaven in Genesis 28. Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



**Helpful tips!**  
Highland County lacks cell phone coverage in many places, and GPS can often point you the wrong way. You may wish to plan your trip beforehand. Binoculars are highly recommended for viewing barn quilts that may be farther off the road. Please respect private property, obey all traffic laws and be cautious on winding country roads. Please keep in mind that some barn quilts are easier to spot than others and summer foliage may block full views of the barn quilt. At the time of printing, all barn quilts were visible, so keep looking! Unfortunately, some barn quilts may be removed, and the full list is no longer accurate. Likewise, some new ones may appear after printing for your viewing pleasure. All the barn quilts on this trail are at least 3' x 3'. You may even spot smaller barn quilts and others that are not on this list. Enjoy!

