



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?



WANDERLOVE

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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 Kenney, 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 over 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 beauty 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

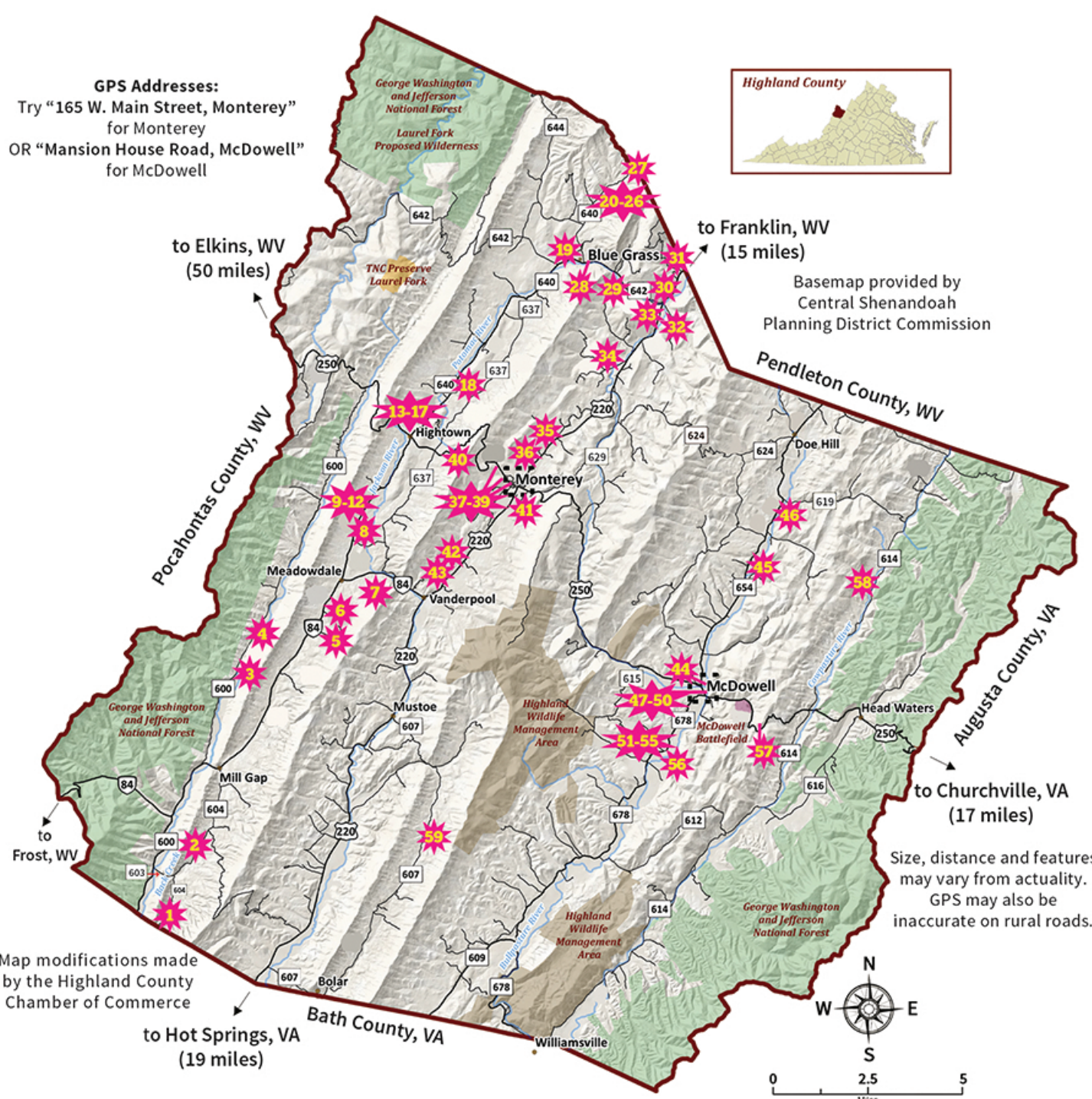


13. Jacob's Ladder

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



GPS Addresses:
Try "165 W. Main Street, Monterey" for Monterey
OR "Mansion House Road, McDowell" for McDowell



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!



14. Clay's Choice

Located at 5948 Mountain Turnpike (north side of Rt. 250), 0.3 miles west of the intersection with Rt. 640
"Clay's Choice" is a historical pattern, also known as "Henry's Star" and "Star of the West." Women in the 1800s often wove stories of unrest into their quilt patterns. In 1832, in an effort to maintain the unity of the United States, Henry Clay offered a compromise bill to soothe both sections. Rather than any political statement, the current owners chose the pattern for one of their names: Clay.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch

15. Virginia Reel

Located at 6054 Mountain Turnpike (north side of Rt. 250), 0.5 miles west of the intersection with Rt. 640
The owner, Carolyn, says "Virginia Reel" is one of her favorite quilt patterns, and she has made many quilts using it.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



16. Bohdi Bee

Located on the north side of Mountain Turnpike (Rt. 250), 0.6 miles west of the intersection with Rt. 640
This honey bee pattern is on a bee house, protecting hives from predators. Summer leaves may block full visibility.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch

17. Flying Geese

Located on the north side of Mountain Turnpike (Rt. 250), 1 mile west of the intersection with Rt. 640
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



18. American Eagle

Located on the east side of 8575 Blue Grass Valley Rd. (Rt. 640), 1.2 miles north of the intersection with Rt. 250
The quilt owner had this barn quilt made as a gift for her sister and brother-in-law, the current owners of High Haven Farm. The farm was home to her parents for over 30 years, and she wanted to pay tribute to her late father, who was very patriotic and loved everything American, particularly the iconic bald eagle. In looking for ideas on the internet, an antique Native American cloth quilt with a bald eagle as its central focus caught her eye. She gave a picture of that quilt to Margie Boesch, and Margie fashioned this barn quilt based on that pattern, featuring the red, white and blue of the American Flag. This quilt is close to the road, so please use caution when viewing.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



40. Shirley's Angle

Located at 4152 Mountain Turnpike (southeast side of Rt. 250)
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



41. LOVEwork

Located in Monterey on Jackson River Road (east side of Rt. 220), just south of the Rt. 250 and Rt. 220 intersection

From the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the LOVEworks program is a state-wide branding initiative designed to promote travel in Virginia and strengthen awareness of the "Virginia is for Lovers" message. Highland County's LOVE letters were the 50th installation of the program in Virginia. The LOVE letters use traditional quilt block patterns to highlight the many special features in Highland.

L = "Maple Leaf Quilt Block" Highland is known for its maple syrup, but this block also represents the love of all its natural resources like scenic views, dark skies and agriculture.
O = "Double Wedding Ring Quilt Block" This traditional pattern represents love of family and sense of community.
V = "Flying Geese Quilt Block" Highland loves its avian population, as well as other wildlife, farm animals and pets.
E = "Log Cabin Quilt Block" Log cabins are a country icon, and this block honors those loving feelings of home, including the history, architecture and simple values of country life.

Barn quilt by the community with over 100 hours of volunteer time donated to the creation of the letters. This LOVEwork was a project of the Virginia Tourism Corporation and Highland Tourism Council.

Post and share your pictures of these LOVE letters using:
#LOVEVA #HighlandCountyVA #VASweetSpot

42. Log Cabin

Located at 2554 Jackson River Rd. (west side of Rt. 220), 2.5 miles south of Monterey
"Log Cabin" is a traditional quilt design, and it was chosen because the owners would like to own a real log cabin one day.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



19. Blue Grass Ruritan Star

Located on the northwest side of Blue Grass Valley Rd. (Rt. 640) at the Blue Grass Ruritan Club's pavilion behind their building, just southwest of the intersection with Wimer Mountain Rd.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch

The next 7 barn quilts are located on the same barn on the east side of Rt. 640 at 1782 Wimer Mountain Rd., 1.8 miles north of Blue Grass intersection with Blue Grass Valley Rd. This location holds the record for most barn quilts on a single barn on The Highland County Barn Quilt Trail! The owner, Conley Colaw, used to make maple syrup in the barn, and he looks to add even more barn quilts in the future.



20. Pigs in a Blanket

Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



21. High Riser

Barn quilt by Conley Colaw



22. International

Barn quilt by Conley Colaw



23. Colaw Farm

Barn quilt by Sandy Barnett



24. Early Riser

Barn quilt by Andrea Eykyn



25. Conley Colaw

Barn quilt by Conley Colaw

26. Colaw Apple

A lone apple tree on Conley's farm is thought to grow a famed lost apple variety known as the Taliaferro (pronounced "Toliver"). President Thomas Jefferson cared for an orchard of Taliaferro trees at Monticello in Charlottesville, but that orchard is now gone. Jefferson considered these apples to yield the finest cider he ever knew. Conley honors the apple with this barn quilt.
Barn quilt by Andrea Eykyn



43. Daffodils

Located at 2730 Jackson River Rd. (west side of Rt. 220), 2.7 miles south of Monterey
Daffodils are a family emblem of the owners, and they have grown the beautiful flowers over many generations.
Barn by Margie Boesch



44. A Compass Star

Located at the corner of Rt. 250 and Doe Hill Rd. (Rt. 654) across from the Stonewall Grocery storefront in McDowell
Anna was inspired by other barn quilts and also helped paint Highland's LOVEwork.
Barn quilt by Anna Maria Weierick

45. Tulip Garden

Located at Hammer Lane on the east side of Doe Hill Rd. (Rt. 654), 3.5 miles north of the intersection with Rt. 250 in McDowell
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



46. Eight Hands Around

Located at 206 Neil Lane at the intersection of Rt. 654 (east side) and Rt. 619, 5.5 miles north of Rt. 250
There were 4 people working the farm, so there were 8 hands to work on the farm.
Barn quilt by Ginny Neil and Sabrina Conner

47. Mosaic Star

Located at 9023 Highland Turnpike (north side of Rt. 250) on a barn behind the house, 0.2 miles east of Rt. 654
Barn quilt by Lucille Maloy and Lyle & Georgianne Hull



48. Geometry 1



49. Geometry 2



50. Geometry 3

Located on the same house, formerly a mill, at 9145 Highland Turnpike (north side of Rt. 250) in McDowell
The owner of these barn quilts spent one summer painting these striking patterns. Geometry 2 and 3 are located on a unique walkway behind glass.
Barn quilts by Liz Devenny



27. Bear's Paw

Located at 3314 Wimer Mountain Rd. (east side of Rt. 640), 3.2 miles north of the intersection with Blue Grass Valley Rd. The owners often see wildlife, especially bears, on their mountain farm.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch

28. Moon & Star Over the Mountain

Located at 2479 Blue Grass Valley Rd. (north side of Rt. 642), just east of the Blue Grass intersection with Rt. 640
This pattern represents the owners' love for Highland County.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



29. Mare's Nest

Located at 807 Blue Grass Valley Rd. (south side of Rt. 642), 1.7 miles east from the intersection with Rt. 640
"Mare's Nest" is easy to spot on a riding ring on a horse farm.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch

30. Cactus Star

Located at 6492 Potomac River Rd. on the north face of Rexrode's Country Store at the intersection of Rt. 642 and Rt. 220
The main reason for choosing this pattern is the image of the cross, with inspiration from the Bible's 1 Corinthians 1:18.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



31. Bear's Paw

Located at 537 High Valley Dr. North, 0.7 miles off Free Stone Dr. on the West Virginia side of Rt. 220 at the county line
"Bear's Paw" is the name of the owners' homeplace. A homemade quilt with the same pattern was a gift from wife to husband.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch

32. Daisy

Located at 154 Forks of Water Rd. (south side Rt. 625), 0.05 miles from the intersection with Rt. 220
This was a Christmas gift from daughters to their mother who loves daisies.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



33. Ginseng Mountain

Located at 6359 Potomac River Rd. at Ginseng Mountain Store (west side of Rt. 220)
This pattern represents a ginseng leaf with red berries and a mountain in the background. It was designed while taking a barn quilt class from Margie Boesch.
Barn quilt by Debora Ellington

The next 5 barn quilts are located at Bullpasture River Rd. (west side of Rt. 678), 2.5 miles south of the intersection from Rt. 250. Hanging on the same barn, the patterns represent the owners' appreciation of wildlife and vegetation in the area, as well as their love for the arts.
Barn quilts by Priscilla Malloy



51. Bear's Paw



52. Turkey Tracks



53. Blue-Birds Flying



54. Dove at the Window



55. Triple Sunflower



56. Country Farm

Located at 658 River Bend Lane off Bullpasture River Rd. (east side of Rt. 678), 2.7 miles south of Rt. 250. The quilt is on the southside of a barn just up a private gravel lane that you have permission to drive up and turn around.
A lovely "Country Farm" is just what this location is!
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch

57. Country Roads

Located at 11457 Highland Turnpike (north side of Rt. 250), 2 miles east of McDowell
The owners like the cross and wanted the barn quilt to be colorful. It's very visible from Rt. 250, the major "Country Road" leading to Highland County.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



34. Love in a Mist

Located at 890 Halterman Hollow Ln. (north side of Rt. 634), 0.7 miles west from the intersection with Rt. 220
The owners run Laurel Run Cabin, which is just the right size for a loving couple.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch

35. Sister's Choice

Located at 1115 Potomac River Rd. (west side of Rt. 220), 1 mile north from the Monterey intersection with Rt. 250
This barn quilt is a tribute to a sister with a favorite color of blue.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



36. Robert's Choice

Located at 699 Potomac River Rd. (west side of Rt. 220), 0.6 miles north from the Monterey intersection with Rt. 250
"Robert's Choice" was selected to honor one of the owners, who was a graduate of VMI, hence the red and yellow colors. There are four blocks here that form an overall pattern, which is unexpectedly different from the single star block of this pattern.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch

37. Shooting Star

Located at 48 West Main Street (Rt. 250) in Monterey, just west of the intersection with Rt. 220
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



38. Starry Path

Located on Mountain Turnpike (south side of Rt. 250), 0.4 miles west of the Monterey intersection with Rt. 220
Even though this barn quilt is named "Starry Path," it reminds the owner, who is a devoted Mom, of pinwheels and kids. It is installed on the old public pool building, which echoed with children's laughter for many years.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch

39. Sunburst

Located at 631 Mountain Turnpike (south side of Rt. 250), 0.8 miles west of the intersection with Rt. 220
"Sunburst" is found on an outbuilding behind the house and is a perfect design for one of the owners, who wanted a barn quilt with "lots of colors."
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



58. Spirit Soars

Located at 3612 Cowpasture River Rd. North (west side of Rt. 614), 3.7 miles north of Rt. 250
The pattern comes from a quilt that was purchased in a juried crafts store in West Virginia called Tamarack. The owners purchased it to commemorate a summer that the wife spent driving all over the state to keynote teacher training conferences. They wanted something non-traditional but crafted by hand, and they found exactly what they wanted in the quilt. It hangs in their home living room, which has a high ceiling, in Reston, Virginia. Their oldest son and wife were married beneath the quilt, which was a choice made by them because "it felt like a cathedral." The barn quilt reflects the same pattern as that special quilt, which ties together the two central places of the life of their family.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



59. Hummingbird

Located on the east side of 4235 Big Valley Rd. (Rt. 607), 4.5 miles south of its intersection with Rt. 220
Facing south at the end of a driveway, this gift showcases the owners' love of birds.
Barn quilt by Margie Boesch



Bonus!

Can you find this smaller barn quilt nestled next to another on this trail? It represents the owner's massive salt and pepper shaker collection!



Hey kids! Can you color in the following barn quilt? Use #35 Sister's Choice as inspiration or create your own custom barn quilt! Full page print version and more designs available at the Barn Quilt Page at www.highlandcounty.org.

