

Fun for all ages at Busy Barns Adventure Farm

By Jack McLaughlin
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Driving down Highway 12, you're likely to notice the carefully hand-painted hay bales, which take the shape of everything from animals to superheroes each year, adorning the

front entrance to Busy Barns Adventure Farm. And while this is the first unique earmark of the nearly 40-acre active farm that most people catch, it's far from the only one.

The property, billed as an interactive, educational agritourist destina-

tion, features a massive array of fun-filled activities for all ages, and across all seasons.

What's more, the Gathering Barn, the property's rural-chic event venue, offers a space for patrons to hold everything from corporate events to dream weddings. The beautifully vintage space boasts the historical look and feel so many chase for their nuptials, in addition to an outdoor dance floor and a full set of sliding doors on both sides of the building to let in the maximum amount of light and fresh air throughout the ceremony.

According to owner Mary Telfer, the space, due to its unique position, provides an experience that many other similar venues can't.

"Say you have a three o'clock wedding with a couple hours of pictures afterward, your guests can go and explore the farm, hold the baby animals, and take part in the 40-plus activities here," said Telfer. "We're not just a barn or a building, we're a whole farm."

And Busy Barns isn't just a show farm, the property — which was purchased 31 years ago by Telfer and her husband Gary as a dairy farm — still features beef cattle alongside chickens, goats, pigs, llamas, and many more animals. Additionally, the pair grows a host of natural vegeta-

bles, such as gourds, pumpkins and Indian Corn.

This litany of lovingly-raised farm animals allows guests to interact with them on a variety of levels. Not only do different animal enclosures stand throughout the farm, but an animal barn exists on site for visitors to hold, pet, and feed the four-legged residents. Among the many animals present, one that stood out during my late-May visit to the farm was a three-week old Nigerian goat. Being a bottle-fed baby, the goat gravitated toward humans, and seemed exceptionally excited when we walked through the barn.

"She loves attention," said Telfer. "She'll follow you through the barn if she could."

And more than just a variety of animals, Busy Barns Adventure Farm is set up with an array of other entertainment. Throughout the property are ropes courses, underground and above ground slides, as well as multi-layered slides tucked into their own private barn areas, which makes exploring the grounds exceptionally exciting, as you never know what kind of fun you'll stumble into next.

According to Telfer, these are able to be enjoyed by visitors of all ages. "We've had 80-year-olds that have done

everything here," she said. "We want parents to partake with their children, so most of our activities are interactive. It's not just [features to] come and look at."

And Busy Barns also places a heavy focus on education, providing agriculture learning experiences throughout the farm. Each year, the business stresses a different

theme, this year being potatoes.

While the Gathering Barn is available for rentals from April through November, the farm itself is open to the public for three Sundays in May, in addition to six weekends throughout the fall, when it features all sorts of seasonal activities, including tractor rides and a full-sized corn maze.



Busy Barns Adventure Farm offers facilities for everything from wondrous weddings (above) to some up close and personal quality time with lovable animals (below). (Photos submitted by Busy



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