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For Roger and Marcia Hansen the dream of restoring the family farm and barn on Conrad Road, is close to becoming a reality.

The Hansens inherited the farm in 1990 after Roger's father, Leo, passed away.

"It has been a dream of Roger's to restore the barn and farm for some time. He has said many times that before he died, he would like to see the barn painted," Marcia said.

Restoration has been under way on the barn for about a month. Contractors from Quality Built Homes and Remodeling replaced old wooden siding, installed more than 70 new custom built windows and strengthened the foundation.

Currently the barn is being painted a rustic red color by Barn Painting & Advertising, Inc.

Roger and Marcia met the painters at the Michigan Barn Preservation Network Conference at Michigan State University.

"We were instantly drawn to them with their presentation and barn painting techniques. We knew then that they were the ones we wanted to paint our barn because of their understanding of the historical significance of preserving our barn," Marcia said.

The painting crew began painting the barn on Friday and expects to be done Wednesday, weather dependent.

"This is a unique barn, no side is the same" said Tim Barnes of Barn Painting & Advertising, Inc..

When finished Barnes expects they will go through about 130 gallons of paint.

Several people have made trips out to the farm or just drive by to see the progress Marcia said.

"I think everyone realizes that to restore the barn is a much larger and more costly than bulldozing it down and putting up a pole barn. It is part of America that is fast disappearing from our landscape," said Marcia.

If the weather holds up today the finishing touch will be added to the north gable end of the barn. The name, Cherry Hill Farm, will be repainted on the barn.

"Once it is painted not one of us is going to be able to keep the tears from flowing. The barn has stood in her 'work clothes' for many years. Now she is dressed in her best, ready to greet visitors," Marcia said. The farm is one of the eight to be featured in the Barns and Byways Tour on Oct. 11. The tour in conjunction with the Ludington Area Convention and Visitors Bureau.

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