

PORTAGE DAILY REGISTER

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SPORTS, C1



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MEMORY COLLECTORS

QUILTERS STITCH MEMORIES IN FIGHT AGAINST DEMENTIA



JOHN HART, STATE JOURNAL

Dr. Cheryl Henderson, left, and Vaunce Ashby work on a quilt component designed by Henderson during a gathering of the the Memory Collectors Storytelling Project at Creator's Cottage on the south side of Madison. The group is trying to raise money to go to a quilting event in Alabama.

Group raising money to visit their peers in Boykin, Alabama

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A local group of memory collectors is seeking help to fund a trip for fond future recollections.

The Memory Collectors Storytelling Project is Madison artist Catrina Sparkman's love letter to her community, particularly addressed to those whose lives have been touched by Alzheimer's disease and dementia. The three-year program emphasizes community and fiber art, with each participant creating their own legacy quilt, including details illustrating their personalities, interests and memories.

Memory Collectors' goal is to work to

prevent Alzheimer's disease and support those dealing with it through art and healthy living practices.

"We realized that there were so many people in our artist community who were dealing with a loved one who was dealing with some sort of cognitive decline, and a lot of our elders, they just did not come through COVID very well," Sparkman said. "We wanted to have a program where we can say, 'You just come, you just grow, and we're going to make it happen.'"

On Oct. 4, the 50-person group is hoping to make its way to Boykin, Alabama, for the Gee's Bend Airing of the Quilts, a fiber art event run by a group of women

not dissimilar from the memory collectors themselves. The quiltmakers come from the Gee's Bend area of Alabama's rural Black Belt, where cold winters without central heating prompted many 19th century residents to take up quilting, and scarcity of resources necessitated the use of recycled materials like flour sacks and work clothes. The Gee's Bend quiltmakers continue these practices not out of necessity but out of tradition and creativity.

"Art can be a beautiful way to cross cultures and to understand people," said poet Fabu Phillis Carter, senior outreach

Please see **QUILTERS**, Page A4

Portage gives updates on Wisconsin Street, other projects

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A summer road project along one of Portage's main downtown thoroughfares is done.

The Wisconsin Street corridor between Pleasant to Edgewater Streets was closed from May 5 to early August for construction work involving concrete replacement and sewer and utility repairs. Work was completed in time for summer-ending events, including Taste of Portage.

City of Portage work along the corridor finished in late July, while the state

Department of Transportation finished its share of the project in early August, city Public Works Director Phil Livingston said.

Livingston said that the ride through the area is much smoother with the newly paved road. He added that while access to businesses can be inconvenient during such projects, he did not hear reports of slower business traffic during the time.

Access to businesses along the Wisconsin Street corridor remained open during construction.

Two other projects are ongoing in Por-

tage, with one on Northridge Drive west of New Pinery almost finished, according to Livingston. The other project along Woodcrest Drive north of Winnebago Avenue is slated to be done this fall.

During the Wisconsin Street upgrades, traffic traveling through Portage to other destinations along Highway 16 was detoured to Interstate 39 and Highway 51, or New Pinery Road, during the project, while local traffic largely used DeWitt, Pleasant and Cook Streets.

Detours heading south along 16 also took drivers along Wauona Trail before

reconnecting with the highway at the city's southeast end. Drivers heading north could stay on Wisconsin Avenue until its intersection with DeWitt Street, before turning right and taking DeWitt to New Pinery.

DeWitt becomes a one-way street heading north after its intersection with Pleasant. It is a two-way from Pleasant to Wisconsin. Traffic heading east and west along Cook Street also was diverted one block from the Wisconsin Avenue intersection, as the crossroads was part of the project.

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