



PORTAGE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

August 2020

301 E. Cook | PO Box 866 | Portage, WI 53901

Phone 608-742-5655

Email: info@portagecenterforthearts.com

Web: www.portagecenterforthearts.com



www.facebook.com/portagecenterforthearts

REOPENING PLAN

As COVID19 continues to affect all of our lives, presenting us with new creative challenges, like you, we continue to carry on day to day with our regular operations and programming as much as possible, adapting when necessary. While the situation remains fluid and uncertainty still exists, there is also hope! To that end, our Board of Trustees recently approved a Reopening Plan for Portage Center for the Arts.

We hope to reopen our doors to the public beginning Wednesday, September 9, 2020, but to greatly reduced capacity and limited open hours. Our new, temporary hours will be Wednesday thru Friday from 1 to 5pm. Doors will remain locked, and you must call or ring the bell to be admitted. Only five people or one "family" group at a time will be allowed in the building. Masks will be required. The plan also suspends large public gatherings, including our Opening Receptions, Lunch Break (Brown Bag) Series, and Concert Series, through the end of 2020 based on state and federal health and safety guidelines. We will continue to reassess these programs on a regular basis.

Of course, this plan is subject to change at any time, as the situation continues to evolve. You can read more details of the plan, as well as find information on cancelled events/tickets, on our website: www.portagecenterforthearts.com/covid19.

We can't wait to see you all again soon...we need you...and our community needs ART!

Board of Trustees 2020-21

PRESIDENT

Betty Kutzke

INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT

Dennis Dorn

SECRETARY

Dorothy Rebholz

TREASURER

Robert Fenske

PAST PRESIDENT

Carol Ziehmke

Melody Brooks Taylor

Barbara Church

Sandy Gunderson

Laura Johnson

Amber Leifheit

Sean Malone

Colleen Murphy

Holly Powers

Craig Radi

Ellen Schieber

Tammy Smith

EMERITUS TRUSTEES

Robert Goodman

Patricia Halasz

Elayne Hanson

Judith Kuse

John Schieber

ZONA GALE

YOUNG PEOPLE'S THEATRE

Xan Johnson

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Heidi Royal

STAFF

Rebecca Gramer

Office & Gallery Hours
We are temporarily closed
due to COVID19.

Please check our website,
or call for updates!



Students from Valerie Lanciaux's (top center) Virtual Film Class had a great time this July working on their group Detective Film! Nearly 30 students participated in this year's Zona Gale Young People's Theatre programs, which went online at the last minute due to concerns with COVID19.



BARN & BEYOND

Photography by Aaron Atkinson

Exhibit opens virtually Sept 4, 2020
 at www.portagecenterforthearts.com
 In person exhibit runs Sept 9 - 26, 2020.

*Please note that opening receptions have
 been suspended, and both gallery hours
 and capacity limits are reduced
 until further notice.*

Free admission always!



Aaron was born and raised in Portage, WI. In his travels throughout Wisconsin and Illinois, he has always admired the looks of old barns spread throughout the countryside. He started his photography as an avid bike rider around Columbia County, and then started biking all over the country and beyond! His photos are a moment in time that give him a flashback of the good old days, a beautiful sunset, or a unique building that needs a little work...those special shots everyone can relate to.

Sponsored by:



CONGRATULATIONS
 to Portage Center for
 the Arts 2020 Visual
 Arts Scholarship
 winner Chloe
 Errthum of Lodi!

Chloe plans to study psychology and fine arts at Ripon College beginning this fall! The Visual Arts Scholarship, dedicated to the support of a visual arts student pursuing an art degree or its equivalent after high school, was made possible by a generous gift from Eleanor Drury. Deadline is April 15 of each year.

In the Drury Gallery October 2020

ANIMAL
 VEGETABLE
 SUSTAINABLE

Sponsored by:
 JOHNSON
 CHIROPRACTIC

BY MONICA JAGEL

Congratulations to this year's winners in our
BIG Summer Sweepstakes

GRAND PRIZE - Carol Caldwell
FIRST PRIZE - Sue Bradley
SECOND & THIRD PRIZES
Judy Eulberg and Jack Paulson

*Offering both
 in-person as
 well as virtual
 exhibits at
 this time!*

In the Drury Gallery November 2020

IR **IM** **ART**

RUTHIE **MCQUINN** **ART**



REMEMBERING THE PLEDGE

Adapted from The Portage Daily Register, September 14, 2012; author Craig Spychalla, Capital Newspapers

A handful of those who made the pledge so long ago stood outside the theater as a play was about to begin. The sun highlighted an old church that once had a towering spire, one of the tallest points in the city. School children arrived by bus, filing inside to watch a production. There were naysayers who never thought something like this would get off the ground in a city that's not exactly known as an arts community. But there were a bunch of people who were just as determined it would. "I don't know if we ever thought it wasn't going to work," said Elayne Hanson, who was there from the start. "We almost lived there to make it work. It's still a struggle. Hard to get people to underwrite the arts."

Along Cook Street in downtown Portage, where several congregations once called this building home, is the Portage Center for the Arts. A place that 25 years ago opened with a fall concert thanks in part to about a dozen people who pledged \$1,000 each if they couldn't raise funds. But the pledge was much more than that. The pledge was to revive the arts in Portage, a town once caught up in a 1960s project that brought the arts to five rural communities — including Portage and Spring Green. Even Life magazine came here to see the arts boom.

Portage was one of five pilot communities chosen to benefit from the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965. The grant and match by the university was for \$116,000 to be used to promote arts in the towns of Spring Green, Adams-Friendship, Rhinelander and Waupun — along with Portage. "[Robert] Gard picked communities that had Wisconsin history," Curtis said. Adams was a railroad town, Portage had Fort Winnebago and Pulitzer Prize winning

playwright Zona Gale, and Spring Green had Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin. "I never figured why he picked Waupun. That never did get off the ground," Curtis said of a town best known for its prison.

The impact of Gard's work can still be felt throughout the pilot communities today. In Portage, several of Gard's programs survived through the 1970s. But by the mid-1980s the theater group was without a home. The Portage Theatre at the time was expanding from one screen to two, and the space for plays would soon disappear. "I was originally involved with the Portage arts in the 1960s and we always talked about that we needed a place," said Portage resident John Schieber, who credited Fran Malone and Karen Kaiser, along with many others, who helped push for a Center for the Arts. Curtis, who was involved with the theater group, said the Masonic Temple in town was used as a temporary spot.

With the Portage Area Community Theatre group needing a home, an idea was hatched for a Center for the Arts. A board of directors was formed with 14 people. In fall 1986, the hunt was on for a location for the arts in this community, an idea that would also see Gard's dream to fruition. The center's proposed location was also one of the oldest buildings in town. The Portage Presbyterian Church was built in 1856 along the main street, with a giant steeple that was toppled by a storm in 1871. The church would go on to become a Baptist church, whose congregation built a parsonage in back, unearthing the grave of pioneer Pierre Pauquette. The Assembly of God was also later housed in the church. With the building for sale, Ray Dorn, also a board member, said the price was too high for the Center for the Arts. "But as time went on, why they kept lowering the price and we ended up buying it," he said. After removing the pews and installing theater seats from a technical college in Madison, the Portage Center for the Arts was born. And in fall 1987, the group produced its first show. Said Hanson, "And we had our first concert there. "We had no music, no money, no director, no anything. We kind of grew out of nothing. And now we've been going for 25 years."

While many know the building as the Zona Gale Center, the original and current name is the Portage Center for the Arts. Steven Rosing, who helped with the original project, said the art programming the center now provides wasn't something that was available in Portage before. The arts were something people previously had to travel for. The idea Gard had for an arts community is alive. When talking about his work in one of the pilot programs, Gard once said he wanted "a place for students of all ages and backgrounds to exchange ideas, dream dreams, learn new ways to express themselves. And further the whole idea that art (written, painted and otherwise) is, indeed, a necessity in a happy, everyday life." ☪

BECOME A FRIEND OF PCA TODAY!

Your membership matters, helping to bring 30 years of arts & culture to the greater Portage area!

Please return this form, or donate online today!

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Visionary | \$1000 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Benefactor | \$500 - \$999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Guardian | \$250 - \$499 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Pacesetter | \$100 - \$249 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Supporter | \$50 - \$99 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Partner | \$10 - \$49 |

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

THANK YOU
the excitement is
building

PCA CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

I would also like to make the following donation to PCA's Capital Campaign for ADA Accessibility and Building Improvements.

Amount: \$ _____

AutumnArts



Your **ABSENCE**
is requested at this year's
annual AutumnArts
NON-EVENT Fundraiser!

Instead of attending an event this fall, we are asking you to show your support for the Arts and the people we serve simply by staying home and staying safe.

In return, we ask you to consider making a donation in any amount you think you would have spent for dinner, raffle tickets, and silent auction items on a donation toward our programs by **September 30!**

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Donations can be made via check or online.

*A special thank you to the City of Portage for their support of our programs.
We are also funded in part by grants from the Wisconsin Arts Board and US Bank,
with support from Big Cheese Magazine.*



Sign up for our Enewsletter on our website:
www.portagecenterforthearts.com
for the latest event updates!

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Portage, WI 53901

PO Box 866

Portage Center for the Arts

Portage, WI

Permit #343

U.S. Postage paid

Non Profit