



Read, Paint, Quilt

Final Report - Ideas to Action 2025

By Donnette Mickelson, Ridgeland Area Library, August 2026

Number of people involved in or impacted by the project since Ideas to Action funding:

550

Do you anticipate that your project will continue after Ideas to Action funding?

Yes. We have received a lot of community interest in having additional classes offered. We are fortunate to have received a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board to offer barn quilt painting classes in the fall of 2026. There will be an additional 9 workshops available for barn quilt painting. We have also received requests for additional classes at the library such as crochet, card making, and other art offerings.

Did your project encourage partnerships and collaborations with any community partners or other WiLS members? Who did you connect with during this process and how might you sustain those connections?

The Barron Public Library has expressed interest in our programs. We have been able to work with the Ridgeland Civic Club and will continue to have activities with the December visit with Santa. We will be creating an interactive barn quilt trail map and collaborating with the Rassbach Museum in Menomonie and the Menomonie Tourism Chamber.

Thinking about your project, what was the most innovative part? What can you, or your community, do now that it couldn't before?

The most innovative part of our project was creating an accessible way for people in our rural community to connect with and create art. Many of our class participants initially did not believe they could design and paint a barn quilt without any previous art experience. Through our one-day classes, they gained the skills and confidence to create a finished barn quilt panel of their own.

We also hosted an outdoor art show featuring all of the completed barn quilts, giving participants the opportunity to share their work with the broader community. The project showed that art can be approachable, hands-on, and accessible to everyone, regardless of prior experience. Our community now has not only new artwork to enjoy, but also greater confidence in its ability to create and participate in the arts.

How do you think other WiLS members could use what you learned and accomplished at their own organizations?

We have all of our resources available to share with any interested WiLS members. This includes flyers, timelines, activities, book lists, etc. Through this opportunity we have learned that the library can serve the community in ways other than traditional library services. We saw people that were not consistent library users attending our new classes and activities. Our small community does not have access to traditional museums and art offerings, and this was a way to introduce art in an easy and accessible manner. Our community art show featured all of the barn quilts completed during this grant during the Ridgeland farmer's market and had over 300 visitors to the show. Our barn quilts are now on display at homes, farms, and businesses as a public art display. We are making connections with county museums and regional tourism organizations to include our barn quilt trail in future promotion.

Project product(s):



