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WEDNESDAY July 17, 2019



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New mural celebrates Central City's past, future



Photos by Sholten Singer/The Herald-Dispatch

BOTH PHOTOS: Students with Marshall University's Governor's Honors Academy program paint a mural on the historic St. Cloud Fire Station on Tuesday in Huntington.

Photos Online
Check www.herald-dispatch.com for more photos.

By AMANDA LARCH
The Herald-Dispatch
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HUNTINGTON — Celebrating the past, present and future of Central City is the mission of a mural created by members of this year's West Virginia Governor's Honors Academy.

The mural, located on the side of the old St. Cloud Fire Station on 14th Street West and Madison Avenue, is a class project for students of GHA, and on Tuesday, community members were invited to paint it with them.

"We've invited the entire Central City community to come and paint because we thought that was really important since it's in their community," said Karen Gergely, a six-year instructor at GHA. "I think a lot of folks are going to see that this is so large that it's something almost impossible to get done in a short amount of

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Judge OK to release DEA data on opioids

Information shows number of opioids sold to pharmac...

By COURTNEY HESSLER and ERIC EYRE
HD Media

HUNTINGTON — A federal judge in Cleveland, Ohio, partially lifted Monday an order that had sealed extensive opioid-related data compiled by the federal government, paving the way for the information to be released to the public for the first time.

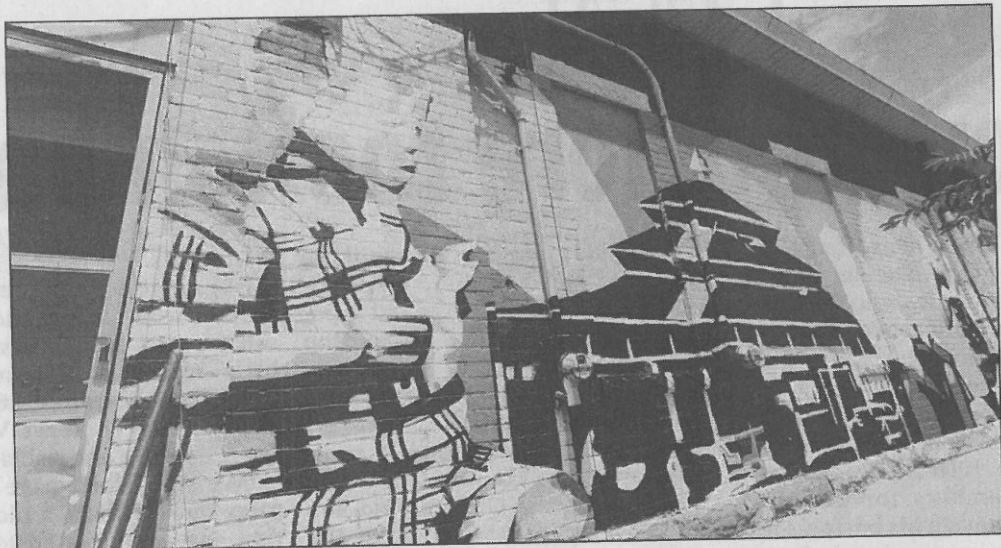
U.S. District Judge Dan Polster, who is overseeing about 1,800 lawsuits filed by local governments seeking damages from drug manufacturers and distributors for the opioid crisis, lifted the ban Monday on all the data collected by the Drug Enforcement Administration previous to Dec. 31, 2012.

A preliminary report on the data released by The Washington Post Monday says from 2006 through 2011 more than 76 billion oxycodone and hydrocodone pain pills flooded the country. The report says West Virginia received the highest concentration of pills per person per year with 66.5. Mingo County was among the highest.

"This is extraordinary victory for people across the country who communities were inundated by huge quantities of addictive prescription opioids."

Suzanne Weiser
Morgantown lawyer representing HD Media

See OPIOI...



Sholten Singer/The Herald-Dispatch

A mural being painted by Marshall University's GHA program on the historic St. Cloud Fire Station is pictured on Tuesday in Huntington.

Mural

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time, and I think coming together to do it is a big deal. It's like, how can we involve the community in conversation?"

The mural features odes to Central City's past, including the Abbott Theater, as well as images that represent its present, such as an Open to All sticker. Another feature of the mural is the recreation of old photographs showing children watching a parade in Central City; Gergely said this represents the past while also looking to the future.

"For the first week we were in the community learning about aesthetics, but also collecting history, talking to the folks that are in the community about what they see as the past, the present and the future of Central City," Gergely said. "And then we looked at some archival photographs and started to put those things together. We sourced all of this to put into one big mural together, and our big theme was the past, the present and the future of Central City. They wanted to incorporate that but also keep a contemporary feel to it and start to think about the future."

Gergely said students have been working on the project

for the duration of GHA, a three-week program taking place at Marshall University. As well as painting the mural, students are creating short documentaries detailing their time spent on the project. Gergely said student input was important for the project, and she considers herself to be a teaching artist to the students.

"We talked about how to talk to officials, how to work with a business owner," she said. "I taught them where to get the paint. We projected it one night and traced the entire thing, so they understood that whole process. We talked about how to mix paint and how to mix colors, and we talked a lot about organization of images and how to make that happen, too."

The theme of the class taught by Gergely is community, art and revitalizing Appalachia through public artwork.

"We're talking a lot about revitalizing Appalachia. All these students are from Appalachia and they're learning how they can bring this to their community," she said. "Hopefully I'm equipping them with the skills that they need, that they can take this back to their community."

GHA member Caleb Spry, of Fort Gay, West Virginia, said he plans to create a mural at home with Gergely's help.

"I'm not sure what the mural will be yet, but I want to go back and ask if there's a space where I can do it because there's a lot of places where it could be done," Spry said. "But (Gergely) said she'd help me write the grants and she would help me get the money to get the paint."

Spry said his favorite part of the mural is the teamwork aspect, and he's excited to see how it turns out, as it will be completed Friday.

"For the mural to work in such a big space, you have to be able to think about the composition, the space and all the lines, how they work together. It would be hard to do it alone," Spry said.

Spry said he hopes community members "can remember to see the past but also look forward to the future" because of the mural.

Gergely said students find their place at GHA.

"I think for me, what's great is that these students want to be here and that they find a place here, where sometimes they don't always find a place at their high schools," Gergely said. "But I think the best thing is it's a positive experience for students, rising seniors, in West Virginia, and for me, these are like the current leaders of our state at the moment. And if they can bring this energy back into their communities, it's a huge deal."