

Description of Sculpture

The sculpture, entitled *Celebration of Life*, is a large-scale sculpture that is planned to be installed at one of the busiest intersections in Cambria County, and has a probability of becoming a local icon. This sculpture is one of the first of five pieces of public sculpture to be designed for the Kernville Arts District, a newly designated area of Johnstown and part the City's revitalization plan. It will be fabricated from highly polished stainless steel, stand 20 feet in diameter, and made from 12 inch diameter stainless tube, 3/4" thick. This material was chosen for its brilliance as well as its permanence and ease in maintenance for the City. The shape is a by-pass circle design, emerging from underground, circling around and re-entering the ground behind with a 5 foot separation. Footers are underground. The size and shape was determined with architectural consultation (Ben Policicchio, Director of Architectural Services, Memorial Medical Center), taking into account the size of the overpass pylons, their strong vertical lines and the heaviness of the horizontal highway above.

The location of this sculpture will be at the second most highly traveled intersection in Cambria County. The sculpture appears to be a perfect circle from the opposite intersection to the Parklet, but yet appears to be a very different sculpture when viewed from the side street, or when viewed from above. CAD drawings, architectural design layout for the grounds and artist sketch are enclosed. The circular design of the sculpture will be visually anchored in the circular design of the brick work and planter on the ground (as seen in the architectural design.) Consideration is being given to possibly extending the brick work pattern into the entire intersection in the form of a streetscape plan (separate project with the City planners.)

Fabrication and finishing work for this large sculpture will take place at the local fabricators, Concurrent Technologies Corporation. It will then be transported as a whole piece to the site that will have the footers previously prepared. The City plans an installation ceremony with press coverage. We estimate that the highway leading from the fabricator's Richland location to the Haynes Street site will need to be temporarily closed for this event, providing a marketing opportunity for the City.

Artist's Previous Work

John E. Stallings recently worked with the Board of Directors at the Johnstown YMCA, to design and install the sculpture entitled "Spirit, Mind and Body" in November of 2007. The press review can be viewed at:

www.tribune-democrat.com/archivesearch/local_story_333232334

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The unveiling event was well-attended by local government and City representatives, the local press, as well as the YMCA board and staff members.

The design was chosen that represented the mission statement of the organization. The fabrication took place at Concurrent Technologies Corporation, in Johnstown. This is a large facility that has vast resource capabilities. It will be the fabricator for this current project.

Contact person for the YMCA installation:

Sharon Jones
Executive Director, Johnstown YMCA
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Project History

Project Statement: John E. Stallings, sculptor and founder of the Johnstown Public Art Alliance (JPAA), in partnership with the City of Johnstown's Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), are requesting support for The Haynes Street Sculpture Project 2008. JPAA and the City plan to develop a highly visible, heavily-traveled area along Rt. 271 beneath the Rt. 56 overpass into an attractive Parklet featuring a single, large-scale sculpture, with public seating and decorative plantings. This area will serve as a Gateway to the Kernville section of Johnstown that has been targeted by the City for economic development initiatives and visual enhancements. It would also function as an attractive Gateway to introduce the Kernville corridor connecting the new Greater Johnstown Technology Park to the Conemaugh Medical Center complex. In a sense, Kernville embodies the theme of "Pride & Progress" as the City seeks to transform a depressed area into a thriving, attractive and vital part of Johnstown where businesses, artists and residents can thrive.
Project website: <http://www.johnstownartspa.com/assets.html>

Inspiration/Focus: In 2007, John E. Stallings brought together a diverse group of citizens to pursue the idea of crafting a public art program for the City of Johnstown and formed a grassroots coalition, JPAA. The mission: "To improve the quality of life in our community through public art that expresses the unique qualities of Johnstown, attracts economic development and enhances public appreciation of art. We believe that quality public art can project a positive image of Johnstown that reinforces civic pride and counters negative stereotypes." JPAA proposes to initiate a public art project by placing sculpture in designated sites, with the Rt. 56 underpass location selected as the best choice for the first sculpture. We believe that this will provide an eye-catching and thought-provoking experience for the community that will likely prompt reactions, both positive and negative. And this is a primary purpose of public art, to elicit responses from the public as part of the process of educating people about art and what it can teach us.

Community: Many residents have experienced dramatic changes during their lifetimes. After years of prosperity fueled primarily by the area's largest dominant employer Bethlehem Steel, Johnstown experienced a sort of "perfect storm" – heavy rains that triggered the Flood of 1977, the subsequent closure of a downtown retail fixture, the Penn Traffic department store, and especially the eventual closure of the Bethlehem Steel plant the early 1980s. Soon after, Johnstown's unemployment rate rose to 25 percent, the highest rate in the United States. Since 1992, Johnstown has been in Pennsylvania's Act 47 program for distressed municipalities and has struggled to make ends meet. However, there is now an "atmosphere of hope," according to former mayor and Councilman Don Zucco. New employment opportunities, especially in the technology and health care sectors, have attracted new residents and allowed natives to return. Some are young families interested in raising their children in a friendly, slower-paced and safer environment than that of more urban areas. Johnstown is a community in transition to a brighter future.

Connections: The City of Johnstown recently created the Kernville Artist Relocation Program, with financial incentives for qualifying artists to live, work, teach and/or conduct retail sales from their homes in the Kernville Arts District. The Johnstown City Council, the City Manager and the City DCED have expressed support for JPAA's proposed public art program. Our efforts have been covered by the *Johnstown Tribune-Democrat* and *Johnstown Magazine*. JPAA is working with the Design Committee of the Discover Downtown Partnership, a group formed to a Main Street Program in Downtown Johnstown. The leader of Kernville Connects, a newly formed community action group, is a member of JPAA who has helped us form a relationship with local residents. Another JPAA member is an employee of the Conemaugh Health System, owner of the new Greater Johnstown Technology Park. There are possible connections with current DCNR Growing Greener projects now underway in Johnstown. JPAA has a relationship with the Art Works in Johnstown!, a new cultural center designed as a hub for the arts in the region; we share many of the same goals. In essence, we believe our stakeholders include everyone, representing every sector of the area's population.

Audience: The Johnstown community includes individuals of all ages and races. A large number are senior citizens, but the number of children and young parents continues to increase as the employment picture brightens. In 2007, Thunder in the Valley and the Johnstown Folk Fest drew at least 300,000 visitors to Downtown. Others come to explore the Johnstown Flood Museum, Heritage Discovery Center and Inclined Plane. The Stoneycreek Whitewater Park is currently under construction just south of the City. If this and similar JPAA projects develop as planned, public art could become yet another reason to visit Johnstown.

Timeframe: Mid-2008 to mid-2009. The installation of a sculpture commissioned by the Greater Johnstown YMCA, located in Kernville along Rt. 271, was placed on site November 2007. This event served as an introduction to John Stallings and the JPAA's planned public art program in Kernville.

Implementation/Promotion: After members of JPAA approached DCED with the concept of implementing a public art program in Johnstown, both parties decided to work together after deciding that Kernville would be an ideal location to begin because 1) it has been zoned as an arts district to attract artists to live and work in Kernville, 2) the City had several sites available for sculpture initiative proposed by JPAA, and 3) the City's Kernville Artist Relocation Project is "a terrific opportunity" for public art in Johnstown, according to Renee Piechocki, Director of the Office of Public Art for the City of Pittsburgh and consultant for a feasibility study for the City that was funded by the Pennsylvania Council of the Arts. JPAA enlisted the support of the Johnstown City Council after making a formal presentation about its goals and plans. The Rt. 56 underpass was selected as the first site for public sculpture because of its visibility and size. It has historically been considered a community "eyesore" that currently gives residents and travelers a negative impression of Johnstown. DCED plans to place a visual barrier to block an unsightly, privately owned property. This and future public art projects can serve as part of an ongoing effort to improve currently rundown, unattractive areas. Despite the inevitable controversy and criticism that will likely come from a cohort that seems committed to maintaining a negative attitude, we intend to remain positive and work to engage the community through special events, presentations to civic and other groups, educational programs such as artist-in-residence opportunities and partnerships with a variety of organizations and businesses.

Measures for Success: Response from the community and visitors will be the primary means of measuring the project's success. Community meetings and surveys could be implemented to provide statistical data as a measurement of support. Another form of measurement is the extent and breadth of support JPAA has already received for the concept of public art in Johnstown as seen in the community meetings, city council meetings and the press.

Lasting Value: JPAA believes that this and other public art projects will contribute to current efforts underway to revitalize the Johnstown area and create an attractive environment for residents and visitors. JPAA will work to recruit volunteers, especially with landscaping projects, to solicit funding through grants and donations and to enlist support from the entire community by seeking feedback and ideas on how to continually improve public art in Johnstown.

Applicant Background, Rationale and Goals:

Background - Johnstown Public Art Alliance with ARTWORKS in Johnstown is the applicant. Members of the JPAA include the following individuals: John E. Stallings, Sculptor, Stallings Art and Cindy Stallings, Nurse-midwife and business owner, Stallings Art; Rosemary Pawlowski, Executive Director, Bottle Works Ethnic Art Center; Renee Daly, Economic Development Specialist, City of Johnstown DCED; Ben Policchio, Director of Architectural Services, Memorial Medical Center; Lauren Lazzari, Investar

Redevelopment LLC; Robin Strachan, Assistant Director, Beginnings, Inc.; Marshall Hersberg, Goodwill Industries and representative for Kernville Connects; Rebecca Catelinet, Executive Director, Johnstown Free Medical Clinic; Curtis Davis, City Manager; Richard Burkert, Executive Director, Johnstown Area Heritage Association; Kelli Ruiz, Board Chair, Kernville Community Action; and Mary Borkow, citizen activist.

Professional references – 1) Rosemary Pawlowski, Executive Director, Bottle Works Ethnic Art Center, 814-536-5705; 2) Jim White, Economic Development Coordinator, City of Johnstown Department of Community and Economic Development, 814-536-5536; 3) Mike Kane, Executive Director, Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, 814-536-7741

Goals – With this project, JPAA seeks to give local community residents a sense of pride, dramatically improve the traveler's impression of the City and provide the first space for Johnstown's public art project. We plan to install additional sculpture at designated locations as funds are available. Future plans include a sculpture garden and programs for youth in partnership with area schools and neighborhood associations. Other possibilities include collaborative efforts with performing arts organizations, and artists' enhancements of store windows, sidewalks, planters and similar decorative features of Downtown Johnstown.

Fund-raising

Within the next few weeks, a professional sign, made by the City of Johnstown, will be placed on site, to inform the public about this sculpture project. The sign will direct those interested to the website, where tax-deductible donations can be made to our fiscal sponsor, Artworks! in Johnstown. A press-conference is planned to occur at that time to help fund-raising efforts locally. A recognition wall will be part of site planning for donors to the project. The exact location is to be decided.