



The basketball court at Prince Drewry Park got a creative facelift recently, courtesy of Mount Clemens-based artist Mary Kleinstiver.  
Photo by Patricia O’Blenes

## Prince Drewry Park basketball court gets artistic facelift

By: Nick Mordowanec | Fraser - Clinton Township Chronicle | Published September 2, 2020

CLINTON TOWNSHIP — The next time you visit Prince Drewry Park in Clinton Township, you will notice an artistic upgrade on the basketball court.

Recently, as part of a multi-faceted collaboration executed by Township Trustee Mike Keys and the Clinton Township Parks and Recreation Committee, in association with Anton Art Center Executive Director Phil Gilchrist and Mount Clemens-based artist Mary Kleinstiver, the court looks brand new.

The project, approved by the Clinton Township Board of Trustees and funded through about \$4,500 worth of leftover monies raised by the now-defunct Festival of the Senses Committee, was a team effort.

Motor City Paint offered a discount on materials for the project, while several organizations — including Quinn Road Community Club, Clintondale Community Schools, the Macomb County Ministerial Alliance and Thomas Barnes, of TCB Mentoring — helped with input and ideas.

The original project idea prior to the mural, Keys said, was a painting-by-numbers type project. But after seeing the amount of wheel marks left behind by vehicles, plans changed.

“There wasn’t a lot of pride on that court,” Keys said.

He said there was a vision “to really bring these stakeholders together in an impactful way,” adding that “it signifies to the people that live in our community that the township is ready to allocate resources and time.”

“We have to do that in our south end,” he said. “There has to be a focus on neighborhoods neglected or underdeveloped over the years.”

These same collaborating groups have convened multiple times throughout the pandemic to provide gift bags and resources to children; to get people to register for the 2020 Census; and to partake in fun social distancing events involving water balloons.

Gilchrist said the Anton Art Center, located in Mount Clemens, played an advisory role. Kleinstiver, who is not a member of the center, was recommended by Barnes.

“The township and Mike Keys had taken the lead in coordinating the project with the artist, and we were able to be vocal in our support and help to share (that) this was able to happen in our community,” Gilchrist said. “We are generally supportive of public art projects in our community.”

It was a pleasure for the center to be involved, he added. COVID-19 has closed the center’s doors, at least physically, but it has transitioned well to online programming and providing various opportunities for creative types: launching an open call that resulted in 1,500 entries from 500 artists worldwide; employing a virtual studio exhibit; and offering mentoring programs.

Kleinstiver, who has been a professional artist for eight years, said the original plan was to colorize the court’s sidelines and center logo, to “just make it bright and beautiful” with “a lot of bold graphics.”

The tire marks needed to be covered up, however, so gray paint was utilized. Kleinstiver said that with consistently hot temperatures, she painted in the morning and evenings.

“It makes everyone excited,” she said, adding that even area teenagers drive up and get a kick out of her work.

Keys said artistic endeavors like the mural do more than spruce up parks. They create gathering places that draw attention from people young and old in the community, he stated, and it helps lead to future investments.

A proponent of south end township rehabilitation since elected in 2016, he said investments in that part of the community sometimes require a harder push than projects associated at locations like George George Park.

“When we’re making a simple \$4,500 investment, that shouldn’t be a hurdle,” Keys said. “We should be embracing that challenge, and we will continue to invest.”

At press time, the court wasn’t fully completed.



Numerous designs highlight the court’s sidelines, while the court itself is decorated in Clintondale Community Schools colors.  
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