

# Roaming Around Reidsville

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An artistic “Dream Team” has been hard at work giving the City-owned Teen Center a makeover. Thanks to the efforts of lead artist Mary E D Ryan and her talented team, including Sunny Gravely, Schala Harper, Meesha Walker and Ruby Blanco, the group has been transforming the Sprinkle Street center’s indoor and outdoor space into an inviting atmosphere for local teens.

Last fall Ryan, with the support of the City, applied for and secured an Arts Equity Grant through the North Carolina Arts Council. The funds have been used by this multicultural artistic team to continue work started about four years ago to give the facility a facelift. The City did its best to turn this previous medical office/clinic into a welcoming space for teens ages 10 to 16, but it never reached its full potential. In 2018, the main area of the Teen Center was re-imagined, but then COVID-19 hit and the Teen Center had to pretty much close its doors temporarily for health and safety reasons.



Now the “Dream Team” Artists Visual Arts Program is continuing to build on what had begun four years ago and is focusing on the computer room, an audiovisual room that also works as a music room space and a life skills kitchen. They have devoted their time and efforts into creating murals based on the designs and art made by the kids and supporters in the local community. At least one weekend a month they have encouraged local creative teens and adults to



come out and help paint not only the murals but also four picnic tables and 12 peace poles that are now located on the lawn of the Teen Center.

The City's Parks & Recreation Superintendent Quintin Robertson said the Dream Team Visual Arts Program has been very successful. It has drawn a diverse group of more than 22 artists from four different high schools. When this column went to press, the kitchen and AV room were complete, and the Study Lab was to be completed the last weekend in June.

Participants have gained knowledge, skills and experience, along with developing their visual art skills, Robertson said. The artwork produced over the weekends has been beautiful and has transformed the look of the Teen Center, he added.

Officials are trying to secure another grant to continue art at the Teen Center. "We are hoping to continue this work by supporting a possible 'Spark the Art' grant that will help spread positive messages through art in our community," Robertson stated. "Working with the Rockingham County Arts Council and the NC Arts Council, we have created a new vision, look and positive atmosphere for youth skill development."

All of these fantastic changes will be unveiled officially later this month if all goes according to plan. Once some final maintenance issues are completed at the Teen Center, the center should open back up for business. After details are worked out, City staff are planning a grand re-opening, which will be announced to the public as soon as they are finalized. We have no doubt that bringing this visual creativity into the Teen Center will also enhance its other programs, such as homework assistance. It's definitely a "win-win" for the Center.

In other news in and around Reidsville:

#### **Independence Day Festival July 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Gates open at 4 p.m. for our Independence Day Festival at Lake Reidsville. Twenty-plus vendors are scheduled to attend. The Kids Zone will include a "Foam Party" this year. A variety of musical styles will be provided by the "West Street Band" which begins at 6:30 p.m. and other times, the DJ "Gift" will be in charge of the tunes. The cost to get into the park, located at 630 Water Works Road, is \$10 per car and \$5 per walk-ins (cash only entry). A LED & Fire Show begins at 9 a.m., followed by one of the best fireworks shows in the area set to start at 10 p.m.

#### **Water Wednesdays July 6<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>**

The popular "Water Wednesdays", courtesy of Reidsville Parks & Recreation with help from the Fire & Police Departments, returns this year to local neighborhoods. Last month the first event was held at Crestwood Apartments on Price Street. This month the sprinklers, along with popsicles and fun, will be available from 4-6:30 p.m. at Griggs Park on Marcellus Street on July 6<sup>th</sup> and during the same hours at Cambridge Park on July 27<sup>th</sup>. For more information, you can call 336-349-1090.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Downtown Friday on July 8<sup>th</sup>**

The annual Car and Motorcycle Cruize-In continues in downtown Reidsville on Friday, July 8. Set for 6-8:30 p.m., the event features music, food and games for the kids. The Chamber of Commerce will provide a beer garden. 2<sup>nd</sup> Downtown Fridays will end on August 12.

### **Concerts on the Square July 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Concerts on the Square at Market Square features its second band of the season, "Tell Me Lies" on Saturday, July 23. Who wouldn't love to hear this Fleetwood Mac Tribute Band? The free concert is set for 7-9 p.m. in beautiful downtown Reidsville. Bring a chair to Market Square and have a great time!

### **Sports Registrations Open.**

When this column went to press, the Reidsville Parks & Recreation Department was preparing for Co-Ed Volleyball, Boys & Girls Summer Basketball and Track & Field. Call 336-349-1090 for more details.

### **Check out the Farmer's Market!**

The Farmer's Market at Market Square in downtown Reidsville is open Thursdays & Saturdays this year from 7 a.m. until 1 p.m. Fruits, vegetables, greens, baked goods, eggs and the work of local artisans are on display and ready for sale. Again this year, you can double your EBT/SNAP, Farmer's Market WIC and Senior WIC (and there's no cap on doubling!). These double bucks apply to any food item at the market. If you bring a friend, you can get \$5.00 in Fresh Bucks. Sounds like a winner!