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CITY OF CONNELLSVILLE EARNS INAUGURAL COMMUNITY SCENIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Scenic Pittsburgh to Hold Ceremony in Downtown Connellsville to Recognize City's Scenic Accomplishments

Connellsville, PA—Years of planning and labor by area leaders to leverage their scenic resources and make good on a new vision of the former “coal and coke capital of the U.S.” have brought big changes to Connellsville, and a first-of-its-kind award by local environmental and civic advocacy group Scenic Pittsburgh.

Scenic Pittsburgh's **Community Scenic Achievement Award** is given to a southwestern Pennsylvania community that has “demonstrated a consistent, long-term, and visionary commitment to protecting and promoting their scenic resources.”

The public award ceremony will take place at 5 p.m. Wednesday, October 16, 2019. The planned location is in front of the mural at the Italian Independent Social Club at 400 West Crawford Avenue in Connellsville. The 4,000 sq. ft. mural was commissioned by the Fayette County Cultural Trust from noted Pittsburgh muralist Jeremy Raymer, and portrays scenes from the history of Connellsville's Italian-American community. In case of inclement weather, the ceremony will take place at the Connellsville Canteen at 131 West Crawford Avenue.

Aside from the mural and the Connellsville Canteen, a restaurant and WWII museum housed in an historic train station, other scenic attractions include flower plantings, renovated historic buildings, and improved facades. Public art calls attention to the city's history and location, adjacent to the Youghiogheny River and Great Allegheny Passage bike trail.

Connellsville also adopted an ambitious Comprehensive City Plan in April 2019 that focuses on further development of the area as a “recreational haven” and local arts showcase with a walkable downtown.

Scenic Pittsburgh's focus is the preservation and promotion of southwestern PA's scenic resources – those places, sights and unique features of communities that make them great places to live and work. The non-profit serves a 10-county region that includes Allegheny,

Armstrong, Butler, Beaver, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset, Washington and Westmoreland counties.

Scenic Pittsburgh's Executive Director, former PA state senator, state representative and Allegheny County commissioner Mike Dawida, says Connellsville is a great example of how communities can make the most of their scenic resources.

"Our motto is that beauty is good for business. Connellsville is leading the way, and showing how communities in the region can provide economic opportunity and quality of life for their residents by taking advantage of what makes them beautiful and unique."

One of the main forces behind the city's revitalization has been Daniel Cocks, who created the Fayette County Cultural Trust specifically to seek funding for Connellsville's downtown. He says the Trust's efforts helped to catalyze a broader transformation financially supported by a broad range of local organizations, businesses and individuals called Downtown Connellsville.

"Collaborations are very important for any community development initiative, and Connellsville has proven that working together produces positive results," he said.

The city council and Connellsville Redevelopment Authority have also been on board every step of the way. Mayor Greg Lincoln said, "It is a great honor to receive an award from Scenic Pittsburgh for all the efforts done by so many to make Connellsville a better place to work, live, and do business in."

Mayor Lincoln also emphasized the role of collaboration in the city's success. "We have an amazing community full of volunteers who love Connellsville and its history. This award exemplifies working together to build a better community and I am grateful to Scenic Pittsburgh for recognizing our jewel on the Yough."

"The people behind this had a vision," adds Dawida. "And through a lot of hard work, and a focus on the beautiful aspects of their community, they've brought it to life."

For more information about Scenic Pittsburgh's Awards, or to nominate a group or individual for an award, go to [scenicpittsburgh.org/scenic-pittsburgh-awards](https://www.scenicpittsburgh.org/scenic-pittsburgh-awards)

About Scenic Pittsburgh: Scenic Pittsburgh is a nonprofit organization that protects, enhances, and promotes the scenic beauty of the Pittsburgh Region by identifying, monitoring and fighting visual pollution, outdoor advertising, and other scenic detractors as a means of promoting a healthy, vibrant region. We serve the following counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Butler, Beaver, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset, Washington, and Westmoreland. Scenic Pittsburgh is a chapter of Scenic America, the nation's premier scenic conservation organization. For more information, go to <https://www.scenicpittsburgh.org/>

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