

MEDINA COUNTY JUVENILE AND PROBATE COURT NEWSLETTER

JUDGE KEVIN W. DUNN MARCH 2017

MCJDC RESIDENTS SUBMIT PROJECT FOR 45TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF FINE ART

Residents of the Medina County Juvenile Detention Center are commonly given the opportunity to create artwork during their detainment in order to express their struggles, goals, and hopes for self-improvement. They took it one step further this month, collaborating to create a three-dimensional project to enter into the annual International Children's Exhibition of Fine Art in Lidice, Czech Republic.

The International Children's Exhibition was established in 1967 to commemorate the child victims from the Czech village of Lidice, who had been murdered by German Nazis, as well as other children who had died in wars. The exhibition became international in 1973 and has since become well known among children and teachers around the world.

Residents of the MCJDC collaborated to create a piece called "Sunburst" to address this year's exhibition theme of travel. Under that theme, children were invited to create works of art related to traveling, both current day and throughout history, home sweet home, or forms of transportation. In a less literal sense, children could also submit works of art related to a somewhat different journey, including migration in nature, virtual travel, or as the residents of the Juvenile Detention Center chose to create, artwork expressing "my own way" - a journey of self-discovery, self-improvement, way to happiness, and working towards one's own goals.

Using unrolled toilet paper rolls, the residents wrote negative words or statements inside of them that they have been called or that have been said to them during their



"Sunburst" art project created by residents in the Medina County Juvenile Detention Center for the International Children's Exhibition of Fine Art in Lidice, Czech republic

lifetime. Some of those phrases included "you're nothing," "you're nobody," and "I hate you."

"A lot of these kids keep their guard up to prevent getting hurt," said Carrie Sellers, Alternative Paths Licensed Independent Social Worker who works with the youth in the MCJDC. "Writing those words and phrases forces them to think about the feelings and emotions they may have oppressed and work toward moving past the hurt to create a positive

self-image."

The toilet paper rolls were then rolled back up and band aids were placed on top to symbolize mending old wounds. Positive words and phrases were then added as a symbol of processing the previous negativity, healing, and ultimately finding happiness. Those words included "strong," "inspired," "good day," "love," and "family."

The art project was coordinated and supervised by Sellers, Danielle Lino, Case Manager, and Alexis Lee, Intern at the Juvenile Detention Center. Dr. Kristine Quallich, Director of Educational Services for Medina City Schools, also supported the project and acted as point person with the Lidice Museum. In total, 15 residents housed at the Juvenile Detention Center ages 13 to 16 contributed to the piece of work.

"If the museum does not end up putting our projects on display, it will not be for lack of effort," said MCJDC Superintendent Ron Stollar, noting the amount of detail and criteria required for submission to the exhibition.

If chosen for the exhibition, the artwork will remain on display May 30 through November 30 in Lidice, Czech Republic.

ICEFA Lidice is a one-round competition for children ages 4 to 16. The expert panel of judges consists of art teachers and visual artists who chose approximately 1,400 works for the exhibition. Accepted works include paintings, drawings, photographs, ceramics, and multi-media techniques.

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JUNIOR LEADERSHIP MEDINA COUNTY VISITS MCJDC FOR ANNUAL GOVERNMENT DAY

The Medina County Junior Leadership Class of 2017 visited the Medina County Juvenile Detention Center (MCJDC) during their annual Government Day February 7. During their visit, Judge Kevin Dunn, Chief Magistrate Lewis, who is also on the Leadership Medina County Planning Committee alongside Court Administrator Sharon Danko, and MCJDC Superintendent Ron Stollar spoke to the class about the role of the detention center, the Court, and how rights for juveniles have transitioned from punitive to restorative justice over the years.

To first provide some insight about the facility, MCJDC Superintendent Stollar passed out a true and false questionnaire for the students to answer regarding the rules residents must follow while detained. Those rules include no television or radio, minimal talking, and generic toiletries. The majority of the Junior Leadership class was surprised by the strict rules of the facility, especially the restrictions on socializing while detained. Stollar explained that although the rules may seem strict, they are necessary to maintain the safety record that the MCJDC has consistently upheld.

"This is a jail," Stollar said. "It is strict in here, but it's in the best interest of our residents. If the residents talk too much, that's when tensions rise, fights happen, and plans are made that can risk the safety of everyone in here."

To speak from the Court's perspective, Magistrate Lewis conducted two mock hearings. A volunteer from the class played the role of a detained juvenile, Danko played the role of the mother, and Stollar served as Prosecutor. The first hearing was set in early 1960, prior to the landmark case *In Re Gault*, which eventually set the standard for Constitutional Rights for juvenile offenders. During the mock hearing, the juvenile and his mother were not advised of any rights, they were not explained the charge or the reason why he was detained, and they were not provided an opportunity to speak on their behalf.

"That was quick but I wanted to show you the severity of the lack of Constitutional Rights for juveniles in history," Magistrate Lewis said to the class.

Magistrate Lewis then held a second mock hearing, this time including today's Constitutional Rights for juveniles. The



Junior Leadership Medina County Class of 2017 visited MCJDC.

students were all in agreement that the second trial was fair, noting that the Magistrate took the time to ask the alleged offender and his mother questions, explain his charge and possible consequences, as well as appoint him an attorney.

"Rights for juveniles have really evolved," Magistrate Lewis said. "The goal of Juvenile Court is to utilize restorative justice, redirecting youth back onto a positive path rather than order detainment as the only option."

The Junior Leadership class was also offered a Mid-Program Opportunity to attend a session of Juvenile Drug Court. Magistrate Lewis said that this opportunity will allow the class to see a true example of how the Court works to enforce restorative justice, and hopefully inspire the student leaders to help create progressive solutions to the problems that their peers face in the community. Judge Dunn also added that he hopes the class takes advantage of their innate leadership skills to strengthen and maintain a successful and safe community. His advice to the class is to start in school by supporting others who may be facing difficulties.

"It's easy to judge people in black and white," Judge Dunn said. "Everyone has struggles, everyone falls down, and everyone could use a hand back up. Be courageous and compassionate enough to be the one to offer that hand."



Magistrate Lewis conducts a mock trial with a JrLMC volunteer playing the role of a detained juvenile. Court Administrator Sharon Danko played the role of the Juvenile's mother.