



# NEWS

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## **Art on Our Trails Comes to Norristown and the Schuylkill River Trail**

**Norristown, PA (November 12, 2015)** – The Schuylkill River Trail will receive its first display of artistic banners as part of Creative Montco’s *Art on Our Trails* initiative on Monday, November 16, 2015 at 4:00pm. Creative Montco, a coalition of local arts organizations, artists, creative businesses, the county tourism board, and county staff, actively promotes art and creativity as one of the county’s most important assets. This new, innovative initiative is using the Montgomery County trail system to display art in accessible, outdoor locations. Its intent is to connect the trails with the county’s arts, towns, and nature by using art to stimulate and educate trail users.

Eventually, murals, sculptures, or banners will be displayed along the unique settings of the county trails – a venue open to everyone 365 days a year. After a great trial run with a banner at the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove, banners will be placed on the fence between the Schuylkill River Trail and the rail line along Lafayette Street in Norristown. Building on the momentum of the Lafayette Street reconstruction project, the banners will feature past award winners from the Schuylkill River Heritage Area’s annual art show, *Scenes of the Schuylkill*. These artistic interpretations will create a sense of place, prompt conversation, and enliven the journey along the Schuylkill River Trail.

“We are excited to add public art to Montco’s trail system. *Art on Our Trails* will enhance the visitor experience and impression of our towns along the trails,” said Jody L. Holton, AICP, Executive Director of the Montgomery County Planning Commission.

The *Art on Our Trails* initiative kicked off with a summit, sponsored by Creative Montco and the Montgomery County Planning Commission, to determine interest in having art on the county’s trails. Thirty people representing artists, activists, arts organizations, businesses, educators, conservancies, libraries, nonprofits, foundations, tourism, parks, planning, local government, transportation

management, and citizens participated. The input from this summit was used to create the master plan and goals for art on the county's trails. The three overall goals include:

1. Improving the trail experience by providing interest, beautifying industrial and utility areas, providing places to pause between landmarks, and educating trail users about the county's wonderful natural areas, rural landscapes, historic properties, and vibrant towns.
2. Encouraging economic development by connecting trail users with the towns along the trail, bringing visitors to restaurants, theaters, galleries, and shops.
3. Raising the profile of the arts by providing a unique venue for county artists and making art accessible to members of the public who might not normally go to a gallery or museum.

To learn more about *Art on Our Trails*, visit <http://creativemontco.net/portfolio/art-on-the-trails/>. For more information, please contact Anne Leavitt-Gruberger at 610-278-3727 or via email at [aleavitt@montcopa.org](mailto:aleavitt@montcopa.org).