

News from Nova Scotia

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My Place: Community Art Project

Colourful art projects are popping up around Stewiacke--projects made from hundreds of wooden shingles, which, over the course of a few months, were painted by members of the community, and the children of local schools.

Librarian Pam Eakin was behind the idea for the project. She got her

inspiration from a similar project in Sheet Harbour. She saw a shack with decorated shingles near a walking trail, and thought it would be a good idea for an art project. The thought percolated in her mind for four or five years before she decided to make her idea a reality. She applied for, and received, a wellness grant from the South Colchester Community Health Board, and enlisted the help of local artists Sandra MacDonald, Judy Stoddart, Kelly Morehouse, and Judy Meadows. Then, she proposed her idea to the Mayor.

Mayor Wendy Robinson absolutely loved the idea, and gave the project her full permission to be displayed publicly.





Because of its convenient location, it was decided that the Stewiacke Library would be used to spearhead the project and provide a place to prime the shingles and get them ready to be painted. The community was invited to drop by and paint. Mayor Robinson and several of the councillors even each painted a shingle. The artists attended Winding River and L'nu Sipuk Kina'muokuom Schools, giving the children an opportunity to paint. Brenda Cox, principal of the Winding River School, gave

her full support by providing a space for one week where students and staff could decorate their shingles with guidance from the volunteer artists.

All told, over 400 shingles were decorated. These were used to adorn a wishing well, as well as the Community Garden sign in Dennis Park.

But that's not all. The artists plan to continue the project, using leftover shingles for more signage around town and on the walking trails as well as decorating the gazebo at the Winding River Elementary School. "It really does, I think, add to the community", says Mayor Robinson. "Public art always does."