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Colorful Murals Larger than Life Set for Milton's Downtown

Milton, PA-- TIME, The Improved Milton Experience, Main Street™ program is poised to launch another phase in its ongoing effort to revitalize downtown Milton. The painting of the first in a series of murals commissioned to both beautify the community as well as highlight the town's rich history is scheduled to begin in May.

Pamela Snyder Ethers, an Altoona-based artist chosen by the Design Committee of TIME, will depict the rich history of transportation in Milton on the south wall of the Milton Moose Family Center, 139 S. Front St. The start of her first mural will complement the May 18 planned groundbreaking for the Outdoor Life Park and the work in progress at the Milton Model Train Museum. The park will be located south of the Moose, and the museum is on the organization's third floor. The artwork is expected to serve as a bridge connecting the existing outdoor historic walking tour to the new model train museum located inside the Moose Family Center.

Snyder-Ethers, who has a BA from Penn State University in *Fine Arts Drawing and Painting*, won the distinctive *Fine Art Achievement Award* in her senior year. She has completed an 1800 SF mural project in Altoona. She comments, "I believe in the power of murals and I think others do as well, otherwise, we wouldn't have a city like Philadelphia with over 2,700 murals. I am eager to get things started..." According to TIME officials, the artist will research details for her work with help from the local Artists' Guild, the Milton Historical Society, and researching the local history book volumes written by current TIME president, George Venios. The 2000 square foot mural at the Moose site is expected to be completed by September.

Milton *Main Street* program's downtown manager, Flora Eyster, described the muralist as a "one-woman show." She was chosen, Eyster added, after an extensive process involving on-site visits, presentations, and interviews with artists. Snyder-Ethers impressed the TIME Design Committee with her knowledge of all phases of mural project development, from building preparation, to materials, and artistry, as well as fund-raising and marketing. She also intends to write a blog to document the progress of the mural and expects to have a chance to interact with community members who come by to watch her work. According to Eyster, "the walking tour, murals and new model train museum will combine to create a wonderful tourist attraction and educational field trip opportunity for Milton's downtown."

Snyder-Etters uses the direct type of application of the mural creation. It involves evaluating, repairing, and preparing the surface of a building and then painting the mural directly on the structure's external wall. Other types of murals include the "parachute" type, where the murals are created indoors on fabric and then affixed to the building. The murals in Philadelphia are this sort. The other type is the "indirect," where murals are created on boards and later attached to the structure. Williamsport has examples of this type.

The inclusion of murals in downtown revitalization has been part of TIME's mission since its inception. An October 29, 2004 TIME document notes their vision to "teach interested persons about art and offer them an opportunity to express themselves by painting historic murals within the community." Joan Catherman, owner of *Profiles of Pennsylvania*, a publisher of brochures, has been instrumental in keeping focus on the mural project according to Eyster, who then brought the effort under the umbrella of TIME's Design Committee. A number of other buildings are under consideration for future murals.

George Venios, president of TIME, noted that "the Moose have donated this community site and are doing an outstanding service to the community with its facility, complex and programs all accessible and working as a leading community service organization in the downtown." Venios also noted that "Chuck Beck and the Borough of Milton have been very supportive of downtown streetscape enhancements and share a common desire to continue to attract people to the downtown commercial zone."

The Downtown Manager also notes that the Pennsylvania Downtown Center, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, and Philly Murals have partnered to expand mural projects across the state. The Improved Milton Experience mural project was approved by the Internship Program Steering Committee and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. All state mural projects receive up to three interns. With written permission obtained directly from the DCED, TIME will use Façade Grant funds available through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to help underwrite the costs of the first mural project. Other funding will be supported by interested community donors. Contact the TIME office for information on underwriting the mural project.

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