

# Students, NCHA work to beautify a side of the Star Theatre with mural

By Jeremy Johnson

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FORT LUPTON — Following a summer when Fort Lupton residents saw the historic Star Theatre's façade receive a much-needed facelift, a Weld County community health campaign — with the help of area students — has helped spruce up the joint even more.



Student volunteers from three Fort Lupton schools assisted a Fort Lupton artist in painting a mural Oct. 5 and 6 on the north wall of the revamped Star Theatre on Denver Avenue. The project was sponsored by Make TODAY Count!, a campaign under the auspices of the North Colorado Health Alliance that is aimed at strengthening communities through healthy and active living.

"Painting this mural will help bring the community together, and gives them a source of pride and cohesiveness," said Janet Green, a staff member of the North Colorado Health Alliance's Community Care Corps who helped coordinate the project and recruited both student volunteers and her granddaughter, artist Shelbi Green.

Shelbi Green said, after being asked to help design and paint the mural, she met with students to brainstorm ideas for the piece before — with their help — drawing up a design that was "based on Fort Lupton's history."

The design includes three teepees — a widely known symbol of the Native Americans who gathered and lived in Fort Lupton in its earliest days — and inside those three teepees are designs representative of Fort Lupton's past, present and future.

This mural was visible to motorists and pedestrians headed south on Denver Avenue Monday morning after student volunteers from three Fort Lupton schools helped a Fort Lupton artist paint the mural over the weekend Oct. 5 and 6. The project was sponsored by the North Colorado Health Alliance's Make TODAY Count! program.

"This will help show how the community has advanced from its roots and how the current community believes it will continue to advance," Janet Green said.

Carlee Rosen, campaign coordinator for Make TODAY Count! and the North Colorado Health Alliance, said murals "have historically been used as a vehicle for education and cultural expression, and can play a key role in building a healthy community.

"They have been used throughout the world to share a community's history, culture and beliefs," Rosen said.

This particular mural also helps to highlight a key piece of the community's history. The Star Theatre has been under renovation since Fort Lupton resident Paul Ludwig began fixing up the historic structure in June. Over the summer, Ludwig, with the help of several area handymen, heavily remodeled the façade and marquee of the Star Theatre — which served as a focal point in this year's Trapper Days Parade — and more recently, new flooring, walls and chairs have been added inside the theater.

Ludwig has said that his vision for the theater is to be a hangout for area youth and a place where families can come to see old movies shown on the big screen.

Make TODAY Count! works with community partners to improve well-being by increasing healthy eating habits and active living regimens. The group is backed by a collaboration of individuals, agencies and businesses in Weld County and is supported through a community grant from Kaiser Permanente.

For more information on Make TODAY Count! go online to [www.maketodaycount.org](http://www.maketodaycount.org) or visit their Facebook page.