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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

March 26, 2019

Arts Around the Square Festival brings in tourists, locals and regional visitors

CUTHBERT, GA. – The Cuthbert downtown square was filled with the arts on March 23 at the Arts Around the Square Festival. With the support of the Georgia Council for the Arts, Andrew College hosted their second annual festival.

Tourists, locals and regional visitors crisscrossed the square to take part in the activities of the day which included listening to music from the Smiths Station High School Jazz Band from Smiths Station, AL; viewing the Crossroads Art Exhibition which featured encaustic artist Matthew Moye from Lumpkin, GA along with other local and Andrew College artists; a solo art exhibition by Chattahoochee Valley Community College's Assistant Professor of Art, Christie Cannon; and an Improv theatrical workshop and face painting led by Andrew College's theatre department.

Events were purposely held throughout downtown to encourage walking and visiting with neighbors and visitors. A panel discussion was held in the Welcome Center. Discussion centered on the Impact of Arts to a Community. Panelists included Joy Jinks from Swamp Gravy, Inc. in Colquitt; Annie Moye from Pasaquan in Buena Vista, Chris Johnson, art professor and muralist from Andrew College; and Karan Pittman, author and Randolph County Historian. A lively and meaningful discussion was held which left the audience thinking about how they can help bring the fine arts to their communities.

The highlight of the afternoon was the Magnolia alley Mural Dedication at 3 p.m. Mural artist Chris Johnson has been designing and painting these murals for several months. A large crowd gathered to witness the official dedication.

Speaking at the event were Linda Buchanan, president of Andrew College, Steve Whatley, Cuthbert mayor, Vincent Gadson, Cuthbert City Council; Gerald Greene, State Representative and of course, Chris Johnson, mural painter. Johnson gave a detailed description of the process involved with creating the murals, from concept to completion. He also pointed out figures in the murals and their importance to the community.

Special guests were introduced, including Cole Taylor, musician and song writer; Eddie Davis, local resident featured in a mural; and family members of Rosey Grier, American actor, singer and former professional American football player, who is also featured in the mural.

Photo 1: Muralist Chris Johnson, art professor at Andrew College, addresses the crowd describing his early vision and how the two most recent murals in Cuthbert came to fruition at the mural dedication in Magnolia Alley.

Photo 2: Visitors enjoyed viewing the artwork on display in 80 Peachtree Street. Featured artist was Lumpkin encaustic artist, Matthew Moye.

Photo 3: Andrew College's Ceramics Studio was a buzz of activity with both ceramics for sale and a display of elementary students' writing and artwork expressing their vision for Cuthbert.

Photos by Sheri Michaels, permission to print is granted.

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Established in 1854, Andrew College is related to The United Methodist Church and is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Situated in the rural southwest Georgia community of Cuthbert, Andrew College offers the Associate of Art, Associate of Music, Associate of Nursing, Associate of Science and Bachelor of Business degrees.