

For Immediate Release

June 11, 2024

Rural Roundup: Building Community Through Art in Kerrville, Texas

On June 8, 2024, the Hill Country Alliance, Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country, and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service joined forces for a Rural Roundup in Kerrville, all about Building Community Through Art. This event brought out more than 60 attendees and offered a day filled with exploration, inspiration, and connection, bringing together locals and out-of-towners alike.

Attendees had the opportunity to delve into Kerrville's vibrant arts and culture scene, with a lineup of engaging activities scheduled throughout the day. From insightful panel discussions to captivating performances, participants gained valuable insights into creative place-making and the role of arts in fostering community cohesion.

"We were thrilled to host this Rural Roundup in Kerrville," said Austin Dickson, CEO of the Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country. "This event was not only an opportunity to showcase the vibrant arts scene in our community but also a chance to learn from and connect with others who are passionate about leveraging the power of art for community building."

The agenda for the day included:

- **Opening Remarks:** Welcoming attendees to the event were Cliff Kaplan, Program Director for Hill Country Alliance and Austin Dickson, CEO of the Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country.
- **The Importance of Storytelling:** A panel featuring Angela Kennedy from the Heart of the Hills Heritage Center, Barbara Oates from the Kerr County Historical Commission, and Clifton Fifer, a prominent community storyteller.
- **Special Performance by Hill Shapes Productions:** A captivating performance showcasing the talent of Hill Shapes Productions, with choreography by Libbie Horton and music by Kä Neunhoffer.
- **The Power of Free, Live Performances:** Insights from Stacie Leporati, Executive Director of Arcadia Live, and Jeffrey Brown, Executive Director of Cailloux Theatre, on the impact of free live performances on community engagement.
- **Walking Downtown History Tour:** Led by Lanza Teague and local docents, attendees explored Kerrville's rich history through a guided walking tour of downtown.
- **Lunch and Learn: Creative Aging at the Kerr Arts and Cultural Center:** Brenda Thompson, Director of the Dietert Center, led a session on the transformative power of creative aging.
- **Transformation through Trails at the Butt-Holdsworth Library:** Jeremy Walther discussed the Kerrville Urban Trail System and its role in community transformation.

- **Mural Workshop at the Butt-Holdsworth Library:** Led by Katharine Boyette, attendees had the opportunity to participate in a hands-on mural workshop.
- **Community Connect - Live Music at Trailhead Beer Garden:** The day concluded with live music and networking opportunities at Trailhead Beer Garden, providing attendees with a chance to unwind and connect.

The Rural Roundup series is a traveling community showcase and a program of Leading in the Rural Hill Country - a collaborative initiative dedicated to empowering rural communities in the Texas Hill Country region. Leading in the Rural Hill Country seeks to foster innovation, leadership development, and community resilience in rural areas through partnerships with local organizations and stakeholders.

The next Rural Roundup is scheduled for October 26, 2024 in Utopia, Texas. Save the date, learn more about this collaboration, and stay tuned for updates by visiting <https://bit.ly/LRHC2024>.

Partners:

Hill Country Alliance: The Hill Country Alliance is a nonprofit organization that works to preserve the natural resources, cultural heritage, and quality of life of the Texas Hill Country.

Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country: The Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country is dedicated to improving the quality of life for residents of the Hill Country region through philanthropic initiatives.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service provides educational programs and resources to help Texans improve their lives and communities.

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Photos:



Clifton Fifer, Doyle Community Center Outreach Coordinator, discussing the history of Kerrville’s African American community during the day’s opening panel on storytelling.



The “Juan Carlos” Green Anole mural with native lantana by Anat Ronen covers over 100 ft of concrete, and expands what a parking garage can do.



Angela Kennedy, Executive Director of the Heart of the Hills Heritage Center, leads a walking history tour of downtown Kerrville for attendees.



Rural Roundup attendees take in the “Regenerate” mural by Andrew and Sarah McWilson, on the site of the Voelkel Building.



Lanza Teague, Director of the Kerr Arts & Cultural Center, introduces attendees to the current KACC exhibits, including the Southwest Gourd and Fiber Fine Art Show.