



Old Glory displayed with pride

Mabel Brown of 342 W. Green St., Hazleton, proudly displays an American flag that was hand-crocheted by her mother, the late Gertrude Kirkham, in 1976. Brown said the flag has been kept in a cedar chest for many years, and she felt the Independence Day holiday weekend was a good time to put it on display on her front porch.

ERIC CONOVER/Standard-Speaker

'Paint the Town' to show spirit through the summer

■ *The Greater Hazleton Area Civic Partnership would like the region to be bathed in red, white and blue until Funfest Weekend.*

By JIM DINO
Standard-Speaker

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Hazleton residents will again "Paint the Town Red, White and Blue" for Independence Day.

In an effort to build community spir-

it, the Greater Hazleton Area Civic Partnership encouraged residents to display flags, ribbons and flowers on May 22, which was designated as "Paint the Town Red, White and Blue Day."

But the celebration was not supposed to end there.

Lena Kotansky, the partnership's executive director, said the idea was to use Memorial Day as a kickoff to what

would be a summer-long celebration that would culminate with the annual Funfest in downtown Hazleton in September.

Shortly after Memorial Day, some decorations hung in Hazleton were inadvertently discarded. That was due to confusion that "Paint the Town" was only meant to be a one-weekend observance.

"Our intention was that they (deco-

rations) stay up all summer," Kotansky said. "We wanted to build on it during each of the holidays during the summer, right up to Funfest. The Funfest Committee even changed the colors on their banners to red, white and blue."

Now Kotansky is again asking residents to show their community pride by planting red, white and blue flowers, flying the American flag, planting

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Paint

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a tree, or adorning their home in some way with red, white and blue.

The partnership devised the idea to show that people can work together and show pride in the community.

Local businesses donated materials to make ribbons, and volunteers made them. They still adorn doorknobs, trees and other outdoor places around the area. The businesses also donated materials to paint red, white and blue stars on local streets.

Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops and other groups planted trees.

The civic partnership has taken on other projects as well.

It is developing a scholarship program for students who promise to return to the area after they graduate from their post-secondary education. Another committee is helping to identify and develop hiking and biking trails along former railroad beds in the area.

The group succeeded with the Mountain Council of Governments in getting a \$90,000 grant to beautify one entrance to Hazleton, along Route 924 from South Broad Street to West Broad Street. This is an important entrance because it comes from Interstate 81.

The partnership always welcomes new volunteers for itself or any volunteer organization in the area.

To find out more, contact Kotansky in her office at the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce at 455-1508.