



Sculpture group, donors help build attractive view for Lancaster **BY JOE GIESSLER • The Eagle-Gazette Staff • April 20, 2010**

LANCASTER -- Motorists need not do a double take while passing through downtown. Your eyes aren't deceiving you -- you are seeing a 10-foot-tall silver piston next to the fountain.

The sculpture, aptly named "Hemi," was one of six art pieces installed around the heart of the city Monday. The artwork replaced four sculptures installed around downtown in May.

David Scheffler, chairman of the Main Street Lancaster Board, said the pieces are being rented by local donors.

"Certainly the sculptures add a little pizzazz to downtown Lancaster," he said. "It makes it nice to sit in the park and reflect. This is what sets us apart from other communities without sculptures."

The art is delivered, exchanged and installed by the Midwest Sculpture Initiative. The Michigan-based group is a nonprofit that coordinates outdoor galleries of sculptures between communities and the sculptors.

Midwest Sculpture Initiative owner and sculptor Ken Thompson said there are 127 sculptures in 12 different venues throughout Ohio and Michigan.

"Our mission is to get sculptures out in the public domain," he said. "Secondly, to supply this to beautify the community and sell the sculptures, which helps the artists 'make it.'"

The six sculptures were spread out around downtown. They are located at Fairfield County Job & Family Services, the lot next to Art & Clay on Main, outside the Glass Museum and around Fountain Square.

Scheffler said the program does not cost anything to Main Street Lancaster, but he hopes the local organization will have the funds to buy some of the artwork.

"That would be our objective, to get enough contributions to buy one every year," he said. "That way over a period of time we would have our own collection."

Scheffler said the artwork helps make downtown Lancaster a destination for people to visit.

"I think it makes downtown a special place," he said. "We have more than commerce and buildings."

Joe Giessler can be reached at (740) 681-4345 or jgiessler@nncogannett.com.