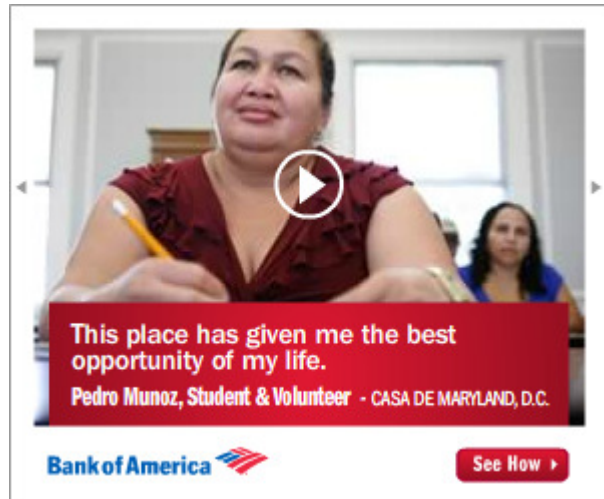


# The Washington Post

[Back to previous page](#)



## Gaithersburg looking for new stations for fiberglass train

By Jen Bondeson, Published: October 19

Gaithersburg is looking for property owners to jump aboard the city's goal of promoting public art.

To keep the city's All Aboard the Art Train initiative rolling, officials are looking for new stations for a recently refurbished fiberglass locomotive, which was repainted by Gaithersburg High School students, to go with an accompanying caboose, which was painted in 2008 by Quince Orchard High School students, according Denise Kayser, Gaithersburg's cultural arts director.

Both pieces now are on display outside of the Arts Barn in the Kentlands neighborhood.

The paint job on the steam locomotive — which is about nine feet long, six feet tall and 33 inches wide — was damaged in a strong wind and rain storm last year outside of City Hall. Its original art depicted flowers, to represent the famous peony garden that once was planted at City Hall, and a deep blue night sky, in honor of the work done at the Gaithersburg Latitude Observatory.

The city was searching for someone to repaint it, so Nilda Keres, an art teacher at Gaithersburg High, volunteered her group of five advanced placement studio design and studio arts students.

“[The project] shows how the students can get involved in the community and put a little bit of themselves out there,” Keres said.

The students followed the original artist's idea of representing the earth and sky, said Keres. They painted a day scene on the front of the locomotive that fades into a dark night with a full moon on the back, using blue and gold to mirror their school colors.

The locomotive fits well with its caboose, Kayser said — the two can be displayed separately, or together. The Quince Orchard students painted on the caboose scenes of what it is like to grow up in Gaithersburg, using drawings submitted by students in city schools as a model.

The locomotive was one of the original sculptures that the city acquired at the start of the All Aboard the Art Train program in 2007, after the city's Art in Public Places Committee recommended it. The program was to be modeled on similar symbolic endeavors in cities nationwide, such as in Baltimore, with its blue crabs, and New York with its apples.

City officials think of trains as emblems of Gaithersburg's culture, Kayser said.

The city's growth can be partly attributed to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Station and Freight House that opened in 1873 at Summit and Diamond avenues in Olde Towne and still exists as a stop for commuters taking the MARC train.

The mayor and City Council approved \$38,650 to launch the program in 2007 to purchase 20 locomotive or caboose sculptures from Cowpainters, a fiberglass sculpture company. Sponsors paid for local artists to paint the trains, which were then placed in well-traveled places, such as Washingtonian Center.

The program has been relatively quiet since 2009, when its promotional period ended and the program was transferred to Gaithersburg Arts and Monuments Funding.

The city hasn't been promoting the program because of the poor economy, Kayser said.

Sponsors pay \$4,500 to sponsor a newly painted locomotive and \$3,500 for a caboose.

A similar program might get rolling again when the economy picks up, Kayser said.

Until then, the city hopes to rotate the train and caboose in highly traveled areas, such as public buildings, outdoor shopping areas and parks, in the interest of promoting art, Kayser said.

Property owners would not need to pay to host the sculptures, though the city would ask that they put out a poster or fliers near the train that promote the Art in Public Places program.

Gaithersburg High students Francisca Erazo, Genesis Hernandez, Angelica Arellano, Fernando Arellano and Jeff Davidson pitched in on the project after school from January until summer vacation, Keres said. The students spent about three hours each week on the project.

Keres said that officials hope that the train can find a place at the new Gaithersburg High School, which is slated to replace the existing school in 2013.

"The kids who went back and wouldn't be able to see the building would be able to see the train and leave a little bit of their legacy behind," she said.

## Sponsored Links

### Free Penny Stock Picks?

Our last pick exploded 2547% - Join our newsletter for free picks!  
www.PennyStockAdvice.com

### Botox Doctors Are Furious

Mom Reveals Clever \$4 Wrinkle Therapy That Makes BOTOX Doctors Furious  
TheHigherLifestyle.com

### The Next Internet Boom

Stock Investment with 1,000% Potential Gains.  
www.smauthority.com

[Buy a link here](#)

© The Washington Post Company