

Lovell, Brushwood Center to host mural ribbon-cutting

By LAKE COUNTY JOURNAL

Oct. 15, 2020

The Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center and Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods invites patients, families, community partners and the public to the 10th anniversary mural ribbon-cutting and reception.

The event will take place online at 1:30 p.m. Oct. 29.

The event will be livestreamed on Brushwood Center's YouTube Channel. The recording also will be available at Lovell FHCC's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/lovellfhcc/, after the event.

"This mural symbolizes the hope and healing that Lovell has committed to since our inception 10 years ago," said Dr. Robert Buckley, director of Lovell FHCC. "We celebrate the veterans and artists who made this project possible, especially Brushwood Center. This project has been a source of positivity for so many in our community."

Fifteen veterans worked with mural artists David Motley and Everett Reynolds and Brushwood Center to design and paint the mural over the past year. Using a combination of Zoom, social distancing measures and creative collaboration, the group found camaraderie and inspiration during some of the hardest months of the COVID-19 pandemic. The collaboration gave participants an opportunity to express themselves and honor Lovell FHCC's service to the military and veteran community.

"Painting for me is a form of therapy that is meditative, calming and helps me focus better on a daily basis," said Leticia Knight, a veteran and contributing artist on the project. "Painting can foster healing through creative expression and allows people to communicate in their own way. It's therapeutic, meditative, stress relieving, decompressing and alleviates stored emotions that cannot be expressed verbally. For me, it's all of these qualities and simply just enjoying what my mind sees in a painting. No, I am not perfect, but art can also have unintended mistakes that result in beautiful masterpieces."

The ribbon-cutting features the veterans and artists who created the mural, as well as special guests including Captain James A. Lovell, renowned astronaut of the Apollo missions and retired U.S. Navy captain.

The mural is available for viewing at Lovell FHCC. The project was made possible thanks to partnership with Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods and funding provided by the McCormick Foundation and an Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs grant.

Brushwood Center provides health services through art and nature programs to military veterans and their families.

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