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Published on Evanston Now (<http://www.evanstonnow.com>)

See Oakton's restored murals

By District 65

Created Feb 21 2007 - 11:18am

Start: Mar 23 2007 - 6:00pm

The community is invited to celebrate the unveiling of the Oakton Mural restoration project at 6 p.m. on Friday, March 23, at Oakton Elementary School, 436 Ridge Ave.

For more than a decade, members of the Evanston/Skokie School District 65 administration, the Oakton School, and the local arts communities looked for ways to save these depression-era Works Progress Administration murals.

The murals in the Oakton School auditorium depict the historical story of King Charlemagne of France and Roland, his courageous knight.

Restorations started in 1997 with generous private donations from Cigna Insurance and other corporate donors.

Following those restorations were efforts for structural repairs caused by water damage.

The desire to continue restoration was hindered until State Rep. Julie Hamos, D-Evanston, answered a long-standing appeal for funding. She helped secure Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity grant funds that readied these historically significant restored murals in the Oakton School auditorium for unveiling.

Superintendent Hardy Murphy and Oakton School Principal Q. T. Carter are especially pleased to showcase these historic works of art in this community event that celebrates the collaboration of community leaders.

The murals represent a significant part of U.S. history; the restoration represents a significant partnership between various constituents of a community.

Among those who partnered in this recent venture are the Chicago Conservation Center, Evanston Mayor Lorraine Morton, the Oakton School PTA and community.

Superintendent Murphy says the murals "bring history to life through art."

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