

Parking meter painting brings together families, community

Eight-year-old Azariah Cosme focused intently as he recreated an epic battle between two iconic characters from the massively popular video game Minecraft.

"The Ender dragon and Steve are fighting," he said, as he painted a pixelated recreation of the battle between good and evil on a parking meter.



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ABOUT TOWN

The scene will be adorning one of 20 parking meters on Greenfield's Main Street soon as part of a program from the Recreation Department to bring more public art to downtown.

"I think this is awesome, especially seeing your artwork around town," Victoria Cosme,

Azariah's mother, said.

The two were painting the Minecraft-inspired parking

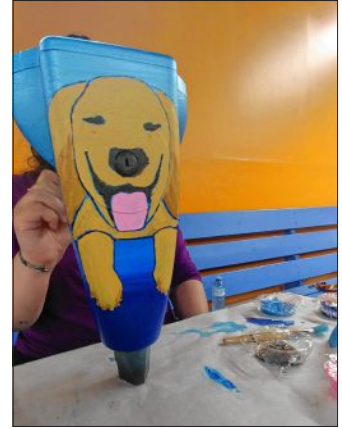
meter together on Tuesday, though Victoria admitted that her son was the one calling the shots on the design.

"It's all about Minecraft and I just doodled on the side," she said.

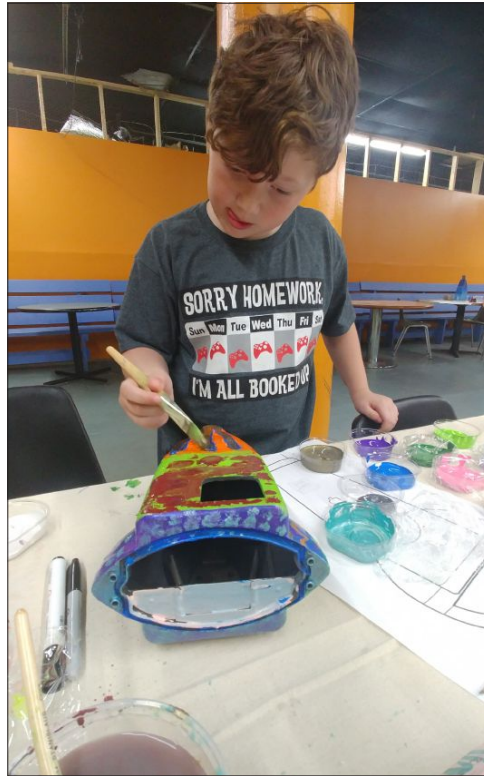
Residents were working on their crafts over three days last week, whether together as parents and children or husband-and-wife, or by themselves. In addition to Minecraft, a number of scenes adorned the parking meters at various states of completeness, from cartoon characters to real-life locations.

Victoria said that the ex-

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Laurie Naughton of Montague puts the finishing touches on her parking meter rendering of her family dog, Ryobi.



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Azariah Cosme, 8, of Greenfield, works on his Minecraft-inspired parking meter.

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perience has brought her closer to her son and allowed them to bond.

"Especially since I have a little daughter at home, so I haven't been able to spend as much time with him," Victoria said.

Ted Hinman and Armeme Margosian, a Greenfield-based husband-and-wife combination, were two of the artists creating their own interpretations of other pieces of art on separate parking meters at the Recreation Department last week.

For Margosian, her meter had a recreation of the classic oil on canvas painting "The Starry Night," by Dutch post-impressionist Vincent Van Gogh. She swirled yellow and white on the steel, creating stars and clouds that stood out against the dark blue sky.

"A child may see this and be inspired to learn about Van Gogh," Margosian said.

Meanwhile, Hinman, whose preferred artistic medium is sculpting, painted a seascape on his parking meter, using "kind of an emerald and then a pearl" paint colors to create a slightly foamy, but otherwise calm, ocean.

His seascape is inspired by the work of Robert Smithson, an artist Hinman said his family knew prior to Smithson's death in a plane crash in 1973. Smithson was known for his works of land sculpture that he also photographed, such as his most famous work, "Spiral Jetty."

According to Hinman, the late Smithson gave his father a piece of art, and his parking meter "looked something like



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A parking meter, painted by Armeme Margosian of Greenfield, takes inspiration from "The Starry Night" by Vincent Van Gogh.

that."

"It could be on Coney Island at night," he said of the piece of art.

Hinman said that the parking meters will bring art to the public eye, and for free — except for when you have to park, of course.

"The thing about public art is it doesn't go away, it stays forever," he said. "Everyone can see it."

This is the third year of painting objects downtown. Last year, the Recreation Department facilitated the painting of utility boxes and parking meters throughout the Downtown Crossroads Cultural District.

Funding for the projects originally came from the Massachusetts Cultural Council Adams Grant Program, as well as the Greenfield Local Cultural Council and the city, with leftover materials being used to continue the project this year.

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