



Staff photos by Ric Dugan

Cheryl Tregoning, administrative secretary at Brunswick Elementary School, walks past the new stained glass windows at the school's media center. Cory Swire was commissioned by Brunswick Elementary to create a piece of stained-glass artwork for the school's media center. The bubbles are symbolic because the staff members blow bubbles every year when students head out for summer break.

## Stained-glass bubbles solidify Brunswick Elementary tradition

By ESTHER FRANCES  
efrances@newspost.com

To honor a longstanding tradition at Brunswick Elementary, stained-glass windows depicting bubbles were added to the school's media center entrance.

Bubbles are important to the elementary school because staff members blow bubbles and use bubble machines to celebrate the end of school in the summer.

Cory Swire, a stained-glass hobbyist for 20 years, was commissioned to create the piece, which is two 7-foot-by-4-foot stained-glass panels called the "BES Bubbles."

Brunswick Elementary was rebuilt and fully constructed in 2023 on the same site of the old building. Students moved back into the school building that same year, and the former school building was later demolished.

Cheryl Tregoning is the administrative secretary for Brunswick Elementary School. This school year marks her 28th in service to the school.

She co-chaired the Farewell to BES Committee alongside Wendy Freeman, who was an art teacher at Brunswick Elementary.

Tregoning told The Frederick News-Post on Tuesday that "every year, for as long as I can remember," staff members at Brunswick Elementary would go blow bubbles in school to celebrate the end of the school year.

The bubbles were for the students who were leaving for summer break and for any teachers or other staff members who were retiring or changing schools, she said.

Tregoning said she and other staff members at Brunswick Elementary wanted to do something special for the school building after understanding that it was slated for demolition.

She said some of the old bricks were saved and cleaned up for plaques, and the Farewell to BES Committee sold those to the community.

Tregoning said ornaments with a photo of the original 1952 building were created and sold to the community.

She added that the staff members wanted to create

something in the new building, as well.

"When we got to tour the new building for the first time, we saw all the windows in the media center," she said. "I just thought it would be nice to have something in those windows, so we came up with the idea of a stained-glass project."

With the money raised from selling the bricks and ornaments to community members, Tregoning said, the committee commissioned Swire.

Kathy Swire, Cory's wife, is a former teacher, administrator, and science and math specialist who worked for FCPS for about 40 years.

Tregoning said Kathy came to the new Brunswick Elementary School building "and was admiring one of our stained-glass pieces that one of our substitute teachers made many years ago."

"She said her husband tinkers around with it and does stained glass on the side," Tregoning said. "I said, 'That's perfect.'"

### Designing the artwork

While meeting with Cory, Tregoning said, she and Freeman emphasized that they wanted something that would "pop."

"He ran with that, and he took it on himself and came up with the design and created the beautiful piece that we have," she said. "From the beginning, it came up with the circles and everything in there."

... Then we went back to having [the bubbles] be the main focus point of the stained-glass piece."

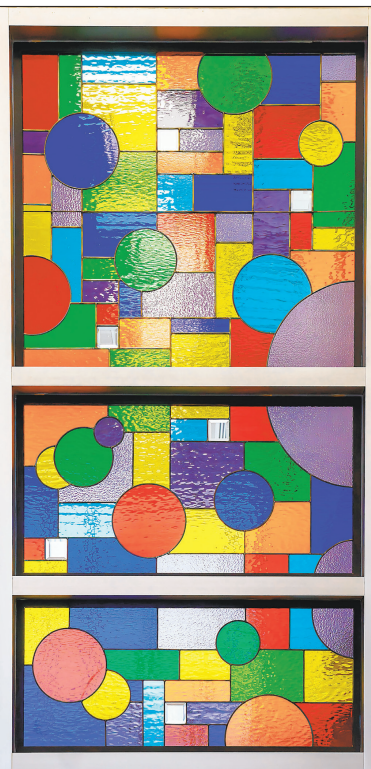
Cory said in an interview on Tuesday that he had never taken on a job as big as the windows, "but I figured, what the heck."

"They had a limited budget, and I could work within their budget," he said.

Cory said he previously had a career in configuration management but is now a hobbyist and full-time grandfather, taking care of his two youngest grandchildren.

He said the design began as large blocks of primary colors.

"There weren't enough colors to allow the pattern to be spread around enough to allow different colors to interact," he said.



One of the 7-by-4-foot stained-glass panels that was designed by Cory Swire is seen on Tuesday at Brunswick Elementary School.

Cory said one of his grandchildren, a kindergarten student at Brunswick Elementary, sees the artwork every day.

"He very much likes to see the different colors in the window," Cory said. "It makes him feel happy to see it, but he has a personal attachment to it."

He added that he was flattered to have been commissioned for the project.

"I just hope they enjoy seeing all the different colors," Cory said.

Kimberly Mazaleski, the

principal of Brunswick Elementary, said the artwork will help students remember the school's tradition with bubbles in the summertime.

Tregoning said the students were "in awe" when Kevin Leatherman, a project manager for FCPS, and his team were installing the piece.

"They would stop and look at it and talk about it, and they wanted to know if that's all or if there was more coming," she said. "It's really pretty."