

# LOCAL NEWS

MANCHESTER

## Nonprofit Launches Sculpture Project

By **JESSE LEAVENWORTH**

JLEAVENWORTH@COURANT.COM

To promote the arts, raise money and strengthen a municipal brand, towns and cities throughout the nation have adopted public sculptures with strong connections to local history and landscapes.

The display of variously decorated fiberglass figures started in the U.S. with Chicago's Cow Parade in 1999 and quickly spread.

Now there are painted pigs in Lexington, N.C.; sheep in Pittsfield, Mass.; black squirrels in Glendale, Ohio; and pelicans in Pensacola, Fla.

With the Runners ART Parade, Manchester is simultaneously joining and breaking from the trend.

Instead of an animal, artists will work with life-sized standard forms of male and female runners, reflecting the popularity of the town's annual Thanksgiving Day Manchester Road Race.

The project is the brainchild of Imagine Main Street, a nonprofit group that promotes the arts as a catalyst for downtown development.

"Because of the importance of the road race, it seemed natural to use running as a focus," Imagine Main Street volunteer Kate Nicholas said.

Artists are working on a prototype runner. The organization is soliciting sponsors and artists, and a grand unveiling of runners is slated for June 2014.

Sponsorships (for one figure, the price is \$2,500) cover the cost of sculptures, materials and the artist's stipend. Any additional proceeds will be used for future public arts projects downtown, organizers said.

For more information, artist applications and sponsorship forms, go to [imaginemainstreet.com](http://imaginemainstreet.com). Click on "Our Impact" and then "Current and Upcoming Projects." Those interested also may call 860-645-6800, or send emails to [info@imaginemainstreet.com](mailto:info@imaginemainstreet.com).