

Named The American Issue, the sculpture (located at Westerville City Hall, 21 S. State St.) tells the story of Westerville's role 100 years ago as the intellectual and logistical center for the passage of the 18th Amendment. The artist/sculptor, Matthew Gray Palmer joined by Westerville residents Beth Weinhardt (Westerville Public Library/Anti-Saloon League Historian), Joe Meyer (Former and longtime Westerville Public Opinion editor), Bill Merriman (President, Westerville Historical Society), Laura Ball (Westerville Parks & Recreation), and Bruce Bailey (Westerville resident/City of Westerville Law Director), together formed a committee to advance the project. The committee selected the quotes based on their historical significance during the Prohibition era. The quotes appear here and on the sculpture as they were originally printed. Find more information about The American Issue at www.westerville.org/americanissue.

The language featured on the "wet side" of The American Issue sculpture is listed below.

PROHIBITION ENDS AT LAST!

- We should be careful, indeed, when we make criminal conduct of what is believed by vast numbers of men and women to be fair and honest and right. - Clarence Darrow
- DECEMBER 5, 1933. 14 YEAR DRY ERA ENDS TODAY

If Prohibition prohibited, if law reached morals, the argument in favor of drastic legislation would be cogent, indeed. But the actual experience had everywhere shows exactly the contrary. The scheme is the offspring of emotional insanity. It would nowise accomplish the ends it aims at. It would simply ruin whole classes and regions, reduce values and increase taxes, leaving the drink evil untouched in its nature to readjust itself to changed conditions, as it has done everywhere that Prohibition has laid its blight.

The fact cannot be successfully contradicted that Prohibition established by law does not produce Temperance or stop the liquor habit where the public sentiment of the local community does not sustain the law. It merely makes men outlaws instead of encouraging a respect for law and order.

This idea of driving people to do what somebody else thinks is right, what somebody else thinks is moral, has debauched the world with more crimes than any other despotic action by dominant government.

Prohibition was a tyrannous scheme to establish virtue and morality by law.
-Congressman Oscar Underwood

- Prohibition only drives drunkenness behind doors and into dark places, and does not cure it, or even diminish it. -Mark Twain
- Drinking has increased, the speakeasy has replaced the saloon, a vast army of lawbreakers has been recruited and financed on a colossal scale...and crime has increased to a level never seen before. -John D. Rockefeller Jr.

Prohibition is a deathblow to the liberty of the individual because it prohibits what is not wrong in itself. The right to eat and drink what we please is an inalienable human right of which even a majority cannot deprive us without at the same time robbing us of our liberty. -Hon. Eugene Quigley

- Respect for the law has not increased, but diminished. -H.L. Mencken
- I think the thing that stands out for me most when I think about prohibition is the law of unintended consequences. -Fiorello La Guardia
- It is comforting, perhaps, to seek the cause for our troubles outside of us instead of in us, and it is so convenient to assign one cause for all the ills of society; but is it just and is it true? I say to you, my prohibition friends, your movement is doomed to defeat, because you build on a foundation of sand, on a perverted principle, namely, the idea that you can promote sobriety from without instead of from within, by law instead of by moral suasion. -Hon. Richard Bartholdt
- Prohibition was the opening wedge to tyranny. -Irene Dupont
- We are convinced that National Prohibition, wrong in principle, has been equally disastrous in consequences in the hypocrisy, the corruption, the tragic loss of life and the appalling increase of crime which have attended the abortive attempt to enforce it; in the shocking effect it has had upon the youth of the nation; in the impairment of the constitutional guarantees of individual rights; in the weakening of the sense of solidarity between the citizen and the government which is the only sure basis of a country's strength. -Women's Organization For National Prohibition Reform
- The only purpose for which power can rightfully be exercised over any man of a civilized community against his will is to prevent harm to others. - John Stuart Mill
- Different persons require different conditions for their development. Things which are helpful to one person are hindrance to another. The fact that people have diversities of taste is reason enough for not attempting to shape them all after one model.

In a free government, sumptuary laws are in contravention of the rights and liberty of the individual. Whenever by force of law it is sought to rectify "vice," that government becomes the abettor of persecution, the friend of hypocrites, and the ally of tyranny. You must bear in mind that the laws of nature are supreme, and laws enacted by man in opposition thereto would be unnatural and untenable.
-Herman T. Goebel

- The time has come to work towards some solution which takes more account of the inevitable traits of human nature. -General John. J. Pershing
- Prohibition forced by a majority on an unwilling minority will always remain a living source of the spirit of disregard for law. Yet, "unwilling" minority is too weak an epithet; the question is of a minority which considers the arbitrary rule undemocratic, absurd, immoral, and which really believes that it is justified in finding a way around a contemptible law. -Hugo Munsterberg

XXI