EMPORIA FIRST FRIDAY ART WALK TO CELEBRATE 10 YEARS NOV. 6



The Emporia Gazette

The Emporia First Friday Art Walk will mark its 10th anniversary with exhibits, artist pop-ups and activities from 5 to 8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 6, in downtown Emporia and at Emporia State University.

Co-founders Kaila Mock and Joel Smith launched the first walk Nov. 4, 2016, to give artists more opportunities to showcase their work while drawing visitors into local businesses. The event has continued monthly since then.

Emporia First Friday became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in 2022 and is now led by Executive Director Kat Dorcas. Its mission is to promote cultural growth by connecting artists with the community.

November's featured artist, John Decker, will present "Fish" at Mulready's Pub, the walk's presenting venue. The exhibition combines Decker's interests in fishing, graphic design and art through printmaking techniques, including relief prints, screen prints and wood inlay produced with a laser engraver/printer.

Most of the images began as computer designs that simplify subjects into basic geometric forms, with patterns and textures adding detail.

The anniversary walk will feature new exhibits in downtown and ESU galleries, along with artists inside local businesses. Many participating venues will offer anniversary specials.



Activities include a doodle booth at Merchant Cycles, pin and magnet making and a gratitude chain at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, and an introduction to the Dambo Troll Emporia Project at Radius Production and Taproom. Trox Gallery and Gifts will host "10," a fundraising exhibition benefiting Emporia First Friday.

Participants can enter a prize drawing by having their Art Walk passports stamped at Mulready's Pub and at least seven additional artists and venues, then turning them in by 8 p.m. Those who visit every participating artist and venue also will have a chance to win $50 in Main Street gift certificates.

Drawings will take place at 8:15 p.m. at Mulready's Pub.

Mock and Smith are sponsoring the November walk. Additional support comes from the state of Kansas through the Kansas Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts.

A complete list of participating artists, venues and anniversary specials is available at emporiafirstfriday.com.

FORMER THERMAL CERAMICS BUILDING FINDS NEW PURPOSE WITH A-1 PUMP & JET



JESSIE WAGONER/GAZETTE

Riley King
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A-1 Pump and Jet took over the Thermal Ceramics facility, which recently closed after more than 40 years of operation in Emporia. Ron McCoy, president of the A-1 Pump and Jet facilities, chose the location based on its ability to accommodate the growing business.

A-1 Pump and Jet manages wastewater and industrial waste by recycling it into useful products. The company plans to use the new facility to expand these operations and move beyond composting by turning wastewater solids into a dry fertilizer product.

"The notion of being able to get from composting to dry cake-like products, whether that gets used as a fertilizer, a bag fertilizer, or a bulk fertilizer," McCoy said.

The company also plans to process and recycle fats, oils and grease from food processing plants. These changes will help reduce odor, limit waste to landfills and recover useful material for other purposes.

The facility will be used for two main operations: wastewater solids and oil recycling.

"We filter out the water and the impurities, and then actually recycle the oil. It goes to a refinery; they make biodiesel, and all kinds of different things out of it," McCoy said.

There are minor renovations needed for the new facility, with administrative areas needing some work and heating. The company also must have the electrical system, plumbing, fire sprinkler system and other necessary components inspected and ready to go before operations can begin.

The facility would open up about 25-50 jobs over the next 24 months. The company plans to hire locally in Emporia and train employees on the job.

McCoy has hopes for the facility to be ready to move in during the first of the year and expects operations to begin in early Spring, depending on the inspections and other necessary preparations.

OLLIE'S

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RILEY KING/GAZETTE

The team leaders of Ollie's at the ribbon-cutting at Flinthills Mall.

"We hire between 30 and 50 people, depending on the size of the store. Those people will be hired locally. We'll bring in a manager from outside, because as we grow, we wanna promote from within," Kyuper said.

While Ollie's provides discounted prices, the store gives back as well. Ollie's does a number of charity donations towards Feeding America, Children's Miracle Network and Toys for Tots.

"It's a business that we really want to become part of the Emporia community," Kyuper said.

The outlet is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

CENTER

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The measures reached the ballot through petitions supported by Emporia Neighbors United. Their approval establishes the election outcome but leaves the legal questions identified by the city unresolved.

The city said it would inform residents about the court's ruling, explain its implications and outline the city's next steps. The statement did not provide a timeline for a ruling.

"We remain committed to providing clear information, answering questions, and conducting City business transparently," the statement said.

The city's response follows differing reactions from petition supporters and economic development officials.

Jay Vehige of Emporia Neighbors United celebrated the results in a video posted Tuesday night, thanking volunteers who organized petition sites and went door to door.

"Each and every one of us made tonight possible and we're just getting started," Vehige said. "So, let's continue to work. Let's continue to organize."

The Regional Development Association of East Central Kansas said approval of the measures would create challenges for economic development by limiting the community's ability to evaluate covered projects individually.

"We respect the voters' decision," RDA interim President Lyle Butler said in a statement. "Beyond restricting data center development, this outcome signals to potential investors that Emporia is narrowing its opportunities for new investment."

The city said Wednesday that it would continue working with residents, community partners and businesses to address local needs and explore future opportunities.

"Our responsibility is to serve all of Emporia," the statement said.

THE EMPORIA GAZETTE
HOURS
Week of November 23
Monday, November 23, 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Tuesday, November 24, 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Wednesday, November 25, Closed
Thursday, November 26, Closed
Friday, November 27, Closed
HOW TO REACH US
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LAND AUCTION!
COFFEY COUNTY, KS
Vaughn-Roth Land Brokers is honored to offer this attractive Coffey County parcel to the public, in conjunction with the Coffey County Sheriff, via Sheriff Sale. This parcel is located between Burlington and Gridley. The tract features gently rolling topography, productive native meadows, two ponds, lightly timbered draws for hunting, and an area of expired CRP that could be hayed, grazed, or farmed. A majority of the property is fenced so the property could be grazed if desired. Utilities are additionally located within 1/2 mile of the property. Excellent opportunity to invest in quality Coffey County Land!
Property Location: 9th Rd and Fauna Rd, Burlington, KS
Earnest Money: 10% of purchase price
Title Insurance: Shall be at the Buyer's expense.
The online portion of the auction will begin at Noon on 12/1/2026. The live portion will begin at 6:00 p.m. on 12/3/2026 at New Strawn Community Center located at 319 Getz St., New Strawn, KS.
For more information, please call Henry Ott at 620-437-7340.
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