

Lumberyard grand opening is Friday



The grand opening of the Lumberyard Arts Center will be at 5 p.m. Friday. There will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 5 p.m. to kick off the event. [Enlarge photo](#)

By [Jeff Myrick](#)

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It's taken seven long years full of hard work and fundraising, but the dream of many for the Lumberyard Arts Center will become official with its grand opening Friday.

"I feel positive that everyone involved with this project is gratified to see the concrete results of their vision and their labor," said Sandy Cardens, who has been at the forefront of the project since its inception in 2003. "I'm sure there were times when some people doubted it could be done; I've learned to never underestimate the ability of dreamers, along with some tireless doers, to get a job done."

At the top of that list of dreamers and doers are Jim and Diane Niehoff, who have been the heart and soul of the effort to refurbish the historic – and one time dormant – building into a home for the arts.

"Again, I have to say that without the Niehoffs' involvement, I'm not sure where we'd be today," said Cardens.

Friday's grand opening will be from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Lumberyard. It is to commemorate the completion of the first phase of the project. A ribbon-cutting ceremony in conjunction with the Baldwin City Chamber of Commerce is at 5 p.m.

Lumberyard organizers are hoping everyone who has played a part in the project will come out, along with everyone in the community.

"I find it amazing when I look back at how many people have donated so many hours of their time, along with a good deal of money, to make this a reality," said Cardens.

The center has an art gallery, where Rosemary Murphy's first exhibit has just wrapped up and where Baldwin High School's advanced art class will be showing their work during the grand opening. There are also classrooms and other areas for the community to use and eventually it's hoped a theater will be in place.

“Part of our mission was to make this a community building where we all have a sense of ownership and I hope that has been accomplished,” she said. “We’re excited to have Christy Carlisle’s Baldwin High School advanced art students showing their work in our gallery for the grand opening. They will have sculptures on display, as well as their two-dimensional work.”

Fundraising efforts continue on the project and the first 100 engraved bricks offered for sale will be on display Friday. Well-known area harpist Patricia Dillard will provide music for the celebration.

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