

# ArtWalk - A Handmade Market returns to Beloit with new theme

By JENNIFER TRANMER Staff writer | Posted: Thursday, May 12, 2016 4:00 pm

BELOIT — As the flowers start to pop and the leaves start to come back, it's a sure sign of spring. The Downtown Beloit Association has the perfect way to celebrate that warmer weather.

ArtWalk is just around the corner, and boasts a brand new theme this year: This downtown tradition is now a handmade market, said Shauna El-Amin, executive director for the DBA.

“We wanted to make sure everything is made by the vendors for this event, so it's definitely a little bit different,” she said. “I think it steps it up a level. It will have more of the smaller businesses who are working on a product, so it promotes self employment and entrepreneurship.”

The 14th Annual ArtWalk is set for 5 to 9 p.m. on Friday in downtown Beloit. There will be more than 30 vendors, six locations with live music, restaurants will feature specials and appetizers. Many businesses will be open late. Vendors will be selling handmade soaps, jewelry and more, and there will even be a vendor who makes items like pillows and aprons.

This year's featured artist is Jan Knutson, who will be selling her handmade baskets at Gallery ABBA, 439 E. Grand Ave. In addition to selling her goods, Knutson will be doing live demonstrations, El-Amin said.

Knutson has been making baskets for 20 years. A mostly self-taught weaver, she uses a variety of techniques and materials. She also draws inspiration from other weavers.

“Even if I see a basket that I kind of like, I think, ‘How can I switch that up and kind of make it my own style?’” she said.

In conjunction with ArtWalk, there will be other events, including the grand opening of Upper Class



## A splash of color coming to downtown

Jody Timmerwilke, center, grabs one of her hat creations to show to Tori McKay, while little Teddy and Tabby McKay look over the colorful headgear at a past ArtWalk. This year's festival is set for 5 to 9 p.m. Friday in downtown Beloit. There will be live music and 32 vendors scattered at different businesses, shops, restaurants and bars.

Awards in the old Annabelle's storefront.

There will also be Art Squares, a new sale this year hosted by The Villager Gallery and Frameworks. In a press release Betsy Schmiechen, owner of The Villager, said there will be 160 4-by-4 inches mini masterpieces for sale at the store, located at 429 E. Grand Ave., starting at 6 p.m.

Each will cost \$40, and the funds will be split between the Mel Donny Flower Fund and the artist, who will only be revealed after the purchase.

Among the live music, there will be New Image starting at 8 p.m. at Grand Avenue Pub; Junkmale starting at 8 p.m. at Suds O'Hanahan's; Paul K. Zimmerman from 6 to 8 p.m. at Bagels & More; Chamber Orchestra from 5 to 7 p.m. at Stanton Shoes; and the Scordato Siblings will split up performances between Vision Center and Turtle Creek Bookstore. Beloit Memorial High School students are also set to perform selections from "The Music Man" from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at Gantry Plaza.

As in year's past, there will also be free trolley rides through downtown.

El-Amin said she anticipated that more than 1,000 people were expected to come out for the event, but many more could come out.

"The businesses all have great products. It's a great opportunity for their customers to come down as well, where they otherwise might not be able to with work," El-Amin said. "It's a great time. Come out and see what it's all about."

For more information, visit <http://downtownbeloit.com>.