



# mission *Kansas*

## TRULY MADLY DEPOT



### TRULY MADLY DEPOT

NEW MISSION STORE FULL OF  
ONE-OF-A-KIND TREASURES

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### STORMING THE CASTLE

MISSION RESIDENT JOSHUA MURPHY SHARES  
HIS LOVE FOR JAPANESE GAME SHOWS

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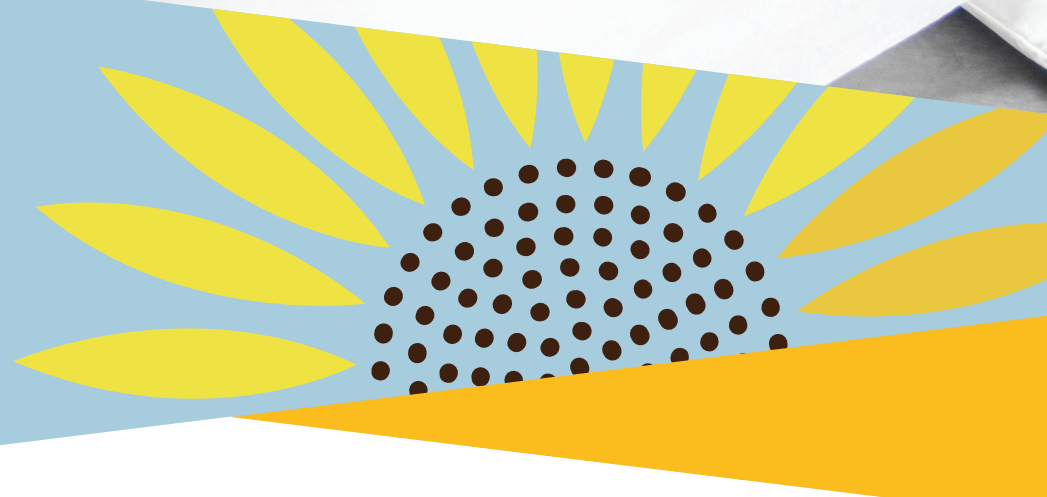
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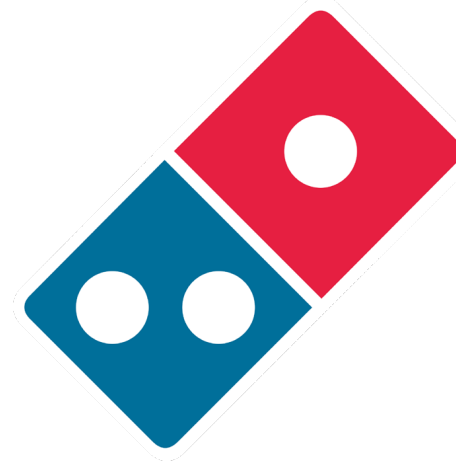


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## WELCOME SUMMER!

Does anyone else feel like they blinked, and half the year disappeared? It might sound a little clichéd, but I'm sure scratching my head wondering where the months have gone.

We've been having a lot of fun putting together the second issue of the Mission Magazine for 2024. This issue really shines a spotlight on all things unique and different in Mission. I often hear people describe our city's appeal as charming, different, and sometimes even quirky! It might not be on par with "Keep Austin Weird," but Mission has proudly cultivated this perception, and I can't wait for you to read about some of these local treasures!

Our cover story features Truly Madly Depot, a unique gift shop that recently opened on Johnson Drive right by the Mission Market site. Owners Kimberly and Mathew Hoppock take great pride in not doing things traditionally, and their gift shop brings all sorts of fun, beautiful – and maybe even snarky – gift items for customers to enjoy. Stop in and check them out the next time you are downtown, and you might even get a warm welcome from Dolly, their first "Employee of the Month" (woof!).

This issue also features a fun story about Mission resident Joshua Murphy and his passion for Japanese game shows. I enjoyed reading about how he's immersed himself in the history and has become a recognized historian and archivist, running the website JM Archives. Last year, Murphy had the experience of a lifetime when he was able to travel to Japan to compete on his favorite game show – Takeshi's Castle. You can even go watch him compete and see how he did!

After traveling around the world with Joshua, you can circle back to Mission to learn about Trent Boultinghouse's unique baseball collection. A Ward 1 Councilmember since 2019, Trent has put his own unique twist on collecting cards. Focused on completing Topps sets from 1957 and 1960, and more recently a 1970's set from Venezuela, he not only



**On the cover:**  
New store Truly Madly Depot offers one-of-a-kind items as seen in this one-of-a-kind issue of Mission Magazine.  
Photo by Kathy Delorenzo



collects cards and autographs, but also the stories and memories of the players he is able to connect with via his letter writing quest. Trent describes his collection as a source of joy and inspiration,

and he hopes to pass along his love for the sport and its history to his young son someday.

Next, we have the pleasure of sharing the story of Mission artist Susan Speck whose unique, whimsical, and sometimes dark hand-built and molded creations can be found in galleries and art shows throughout the region. The interview with Susan highlights her creative process and her passion for passing along her craft to others. She frequently offers classes in her studio where students have the opportunity to learn throwing on a kick wheel, hand building, and refining and glazing. I enjoyed learning about how Susan's art has evolved over the years, and her creations are definitely one of a kind!

This issue makes another stop along Johnson Drive at Casey's Auto, but maybe not for what you might be thinking. Owner Carl Casey has developed quite a reputation for taking care of birds, squirrels, rabbits, and other creatures in addition to keeping cars running smoothly. You have to get up pretty early (4:15 am) to catch Carl and his friends, but it's no surprise to anyone who knows both Carl and his wife Cathy that they are invested in caring for all of their customers as well as their visiting animal menagerie.

Finally, this issue concludes with a look back piece about Mission's Guinness World Record attempt in 2009: "The Largest Painting Made with Footprints." Officially certified by a representative on site, this story shares some interesting perspectives about building confidence and community. It was a nice "walk" down memory lane.

I hope to see you out and about this summer at the Mission Market, the Mission Family Aquatic Center, or any of our special events hosted by the Parks + Recreation Department. It's going to be a GREAT summer in Mission!

*Sollie*

-Sollie Flora, Mayor

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JULY 2024

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New Mission store full of one-of-a-kind treasures



Dolly, Truly Madly Depot owners Kimberly and Mathew Hoppock's Japanese Chin, rests among the cards and pillows of the new gift store.

TRULY MADLY DEPOT

# Truly Madly Depot Offers Unique Finds ✨

By Kris Baker • Photos by Kathy Delorenzo

**H**ave you ever arrived at a friend's home only to see the most interesting piece of decor, an item that makes the entire space stand out? Did you leave thinking you needed a new signature piece for your home? If you are looking for the unusual, the weird or the wild, then you should head straight to a new store in Mission; a store known for doing its own thing.

Truly Madly Depot is an eclectic, novelty gift store filled with knick knacks, doo dads and bric-a-brac. Owners Kimberly and Mathew Hoppock pride themselves in not doing anything traditionally, including when they opened the business.

"We opened on February 17, 2024. You know, right after all of the major shopping holidays were over for the season," laughs Kimberly. She believes that her commitment to walking her own unique path led her to opening the store.

"As a designer and marketer, I've spent most of my adult life helping build up the businesses of other people," Kimberly said. "Matthew is already a business owner, and when we talked about starting a second business together, a store was what excited me the most."

**"When deciding what type of store we wanted to open, I knew we had to sell things that brought us some form of joy."**

— Kimberly Hoppock, Co-Owner

Marching to the beat of her own drum also meant that first and foremost her store would offer things that appealed to her.

"When deciding what type of store we wanted to open, I knew we had to sell things that brought us some form of joy," Kimberly said. "Did it make me giggle?"



Kimberly and Mathew Hoppock opened their Mission store last February.

No? Was it absolutely gorgeous? No? Was it just weird enough to be amazing? No? Then it's not for our store! I wanted to sell things that I loved and thought others would love, too."

So that is what Truly Madly Depot became. A collection of special things from around the world (as well as from close to home) that make the Hoppocks — and their customers — happy.

Truly Madly Depot offers indie gift items like snarky greeting cards and unique gift wrap from individual artists, as well as art prints, funny mugs, cute trinkets, and an array of major-life-event gifts. Some less-traditional items found at the shop include the large selection of Japanese stationery

and other one-of-a-kind Japanese imports.

The Hoppocks live just a few minutes from the store. Last November, Matthew noticed a 'for rent' sign in a Johnson Drive storefront as he was grabbing donuts from Fluffy Fresh. Until that point, they hadn't been able to find the right location at the right price, so had decided to do e-commerce until the right spot opened up. Matthew called the same day he saw the sign, filled out an application, and Kimberly said the rest was something of a whirlwind.

It is the people they have met that have been the most rewarding result of opening their new business. Kimberly



enjoys talking with customers about interesting items, and says these conversations have helped to inspire many product choices for the store.

"Truly Madly Depot has been welcomed with open arms," Kimberly said. "Everyone is so encouraging and kind. I have loved living and working in Mission for several years, and I now feel more connected to my neighborhood than ever."

Some of the store's frequent visitors have been people walking their dogs who stop in to get a treat for their dog. Truly Madly Depot is polite-pet friendly, and does have treats for all dogs. About half the time, you will find

Dolly, Kim's five-pound Japanese Chin, enthusiastically greeting customers. Dolly was proudly named Truly Madly Depot's first "Employee of the Month!"

"I love that I have become friends with a few people who stop in just to say 'hi' while they're walking by," Kimberly said. "I love how supportive all of the other shop owners on Johnson Drive have been as well. We're planning on collaborating on events for the community, and I'm so excited about it all."

Truly Madly Depot is located at 5727 Johnson Dr., Mission, Kansas. For more information follow them on FaceBook @ TrulyMadlyDepot.



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# STORMING THE CASTLE



## MISSION RESIDENT JOSHUA MURPHY SHARES

By Kris Baker • Photos by Kathy Delorenzo



Mission resident Joshua Murphy traveled all the way to Japan to compete on his favorite show.

On the smash hit South Korean show *Squid Games*, contestants compete in games with literal life and death consequences. Some of the inspiration for *Squid Games* came from a particular brand of Japanese game shows that have been growing in worldwide popularity since the 1980s.

Mission resident Joshua Murphy knows this because he has taken it upon himself to document the history and stories of Japanese game shows on his website, JM Archives. Though perhaps not life and death, Murphy is serious about preserving and talking about these shows. In fact, if there was competition on this topic, Murphy would be a world champion.

As a kid, while his friends were watching American programs like *Spongebob Squarepants* and *Glee* or reality shows like *Survivor* and *Big Brother*, Murphy discovered a show that would shape a large part of his future. *Takeshi's Castle* is a Japanese game show that originally ran from 1986 to 1990.

On the program players competed in physical challenges to conquer a castle which happened to be owned by Japanese comedian Beat Takeshi. The show became a worldwide cult hit and the brand of conquering funny obstacles inspired later shows like *Wipeout* and *American Ninja Warrior*.

"It started when I saw clips online,"

Murphy said. "First it was *Takeshi's Castle*, which became my favorite show. I started finding out everything I could about the show. I found copies of the shows and watched every episode over and over again."

Murphy's infatuation with *Takeshi's Castle* soon grew into a passion for other Japanese game shows. Murphy has collected books, memorabilia and other artifacts from a range of Japanese shows.

But his favorite remained *Takeshi's Castle*, Murphy had seen every episode multiple times, he had also developed a special talent about the show.

"Pick a number between one and 133," Murphy asks. "84."

"On episode 84, the games played were Perfection of the Border, The First Fortress and The Devil's Domain," Murphy said without hesitation. He knows every game played on every episode by heart. Murphy simply calls this 'the trick,' and this very specific talent would soon come in handy.

In 2022 Amazon announced they were reviving *Takeshi's Castle* and filming all new episodes. Murphy wondered if this could be his big chance. Would the show be accepting international contestants? And if so, how would he even get to Japan? On top of that, there was the fact that Murphy didn't speak Japanese.

Murphy hired a Japanese interpreter to improve his language skills. He filled out

the application online, which was all in Japanese. That led to a Zoom call with the show's producers on which he shared his passion for *Takeshi's Castle* and shared his collection of memorabilia from the show. His interpreter then told Murphy to do 'the trick.'

### JOSHUA MURPHY QUICK FACTS

- In his day job, he performs account maintenance with LPL Financial
- He moved to Mission in 2005 to be closer to his work
- In addition to appearing on the rebooted *Takeshi's Castle* on Amazon Prime he is also featured in a preview special for the show which can be found on youtube.com

"I asked them for a number, and then told them all the games that had been played on that episode. I think that impressed them," Murphy said. "They knew I was taking it seriously. They said they didn't know anyone else in the world who could do that."

After lots of COVID-19 tests and getting an expedited passport, Murphy was on his way to a country he was very familiar with but had never seen.

### A GAME IN THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN

"Can I buy a vowel?"  
"What is the magna carta?"

## HIS LOVE FOR JAPANESE GAME SHOWS



Joshua Murphy has an extensive collection of memorabilia from Japanese game shows. He believes his collection could be one of the largest in the world.



“Survey says.”

These are all familiar phrases from American game shows. Murphy says the experiences and sounds from the Japanese game show were a little more in your face. In August of 2022, Murphy and his fellow contestants were standing in mud, getting ready to scale a wall.

“There is a general that is leading all the contestants, and you feel like you are about to go to battle,” Murphy said. “I realized this was not about winning. This was about survival to say the least.”

Murphy had met some of his fellow American contestants, although they all lived in Japan. Murphy remembers, “They couldn’t believe I traveled so far to do the show.”

But Murphy wasn’t to be discouraged. After the general’s instructions the group of around 100 contestants ran at the wall, attempting to scale it.

“I hung back, waiting to see if there was a trick,” Murphy said. When he did attempt to climb, large hoses began pelting contestants with water. “Another contestant grabbed me and helped me over. We made it and there was a real sense of camaraderie and achievement.”

Murphy says the rest of the filming was a blur, and he encourages people to watch the episode to see how he finished. He is happy with the way he was portrayed on the show, which first aired in April of 2023. He describes the rest of his time in Japan as fantastic, seeing the sights on a bus tour

and visiting Midoriyama where the original show was filmed.

“It was a totally positive experience,” Murphy said. “It was very exciting. I just kept telling myself to enjoy every part of it.”

For Joshua Murphy, his passion definitely sits a little more outside the box. He says some people don’t understand his love of Japanese game shows. He doesn’t mind, because it makes perfect sense to him.

“People say it’s just a show,” Murphy said. “But it’s changed my life.”

To see Murphy’s interviews with television personalities visit his website at [jmarchives.com](http://jmarchives.com). You can see his appearance on *Takeshi’s Castle* on Amazon Prime.



Items in Joshua Murphy's collection include actual props used on shows like *Takeshi's Castle*.

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- THE BAR AT WEST PLAZA**  
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913-248-9378
- THE BAR OLATHE**  
14871 151st Street, Olathe, KS 66062  
913-839-3800
- THE BAR PRAIRIE VILLAGE**  
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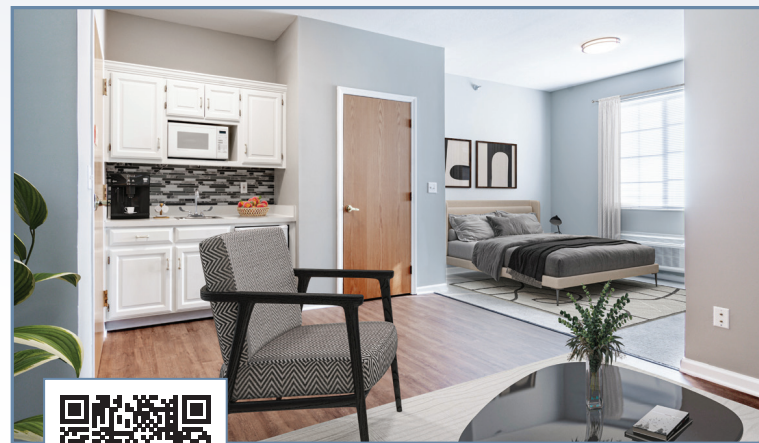


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NEWSLETTER

[missionks.org](http://missionks.org)

## We're Back for the Summer

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### MISSION CITY HALL

6090 Woodson | Mission, KS 66202

Open Monday through Friday  
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P 913.676.8350



### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Community Development,  
Finance and Administration

First Wednesday every month 6:30 p.m.  
(overflow business considered on the second Wednesday of the month as necessary).

### CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Third Wednesday every month 7 p.m.

### COUNCIL WORK SESSIONS

Fourth Wednesday every month 7 p.m.

All meetings are open to the public.  
Visit the calendar at [www.missionks.org](http://www.missionks.org)  
for a complete listing of meetings.

### GOVERNING BODY

#### MAYOR

Sollie Flora 913.676.8351

#### WARD I COUNCIL MEMBERS

Trent Boultinghouse 620.238.0394  
Joseph Haden Chomphosy 913.676.8350

#### WARD II COUNCIL MEMBERS

Lea Loudon 913.242.4284  
Mary Ryherd 913.221.2630

#### WARD III COUNCIL MEMBERS

Debbie Kring 913.722.6901  
Brian Schmid 913.909.9041

#### WARD IV COUNCIL MEMBERS

Cheryl Carpenter-Davis 816.807.0605  
Ben Chociey 816.332.7985

## Mission Police Citizens Academy 2024

This 10-week program gives residents the opportunity to gain a better understanding of how the Mission Police Department works. The Citizens Police Academy meets weekly in the evening and is designed to be both educational and enjoyable. The Academy explores criminal and death investigations, patrol operations, DUI and traffic enforcement, interview and interrogation techniques, domestic violence situations and response, search and seizure, defensive tactics, less lethal weapons, and firearms. Participants also receive behind-the-scenes tours of the Johnson County Adult Detention Center, Johnson County Emergency Communications Center and the County's state-of-the-art criminalistics laboratory. For more information or to apply for a spot,

please visit our website at [www.missionks.org/city-government/departments/police/community/](http://www.missionks.org/city-government/departments/police/community/). Applications are currently being accepted from interested residents.

For questions, please contact: Lt. Robert Meyers, at [rmeyers@missionks.org](mailto:rmeyers@missionks.org) or 913.676.8333.



Mission Police  
Department  
Citizens Academy 2024

Thursdays 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm  
Sept. 5, 2024 - Nov. 7, 2024



## Help Us Keep Mission Looking and Feeling Its Best!

Here are some of the most common codes violations that our Community Development team encounter in the spring and summer months, along with tips on how to avoid them!

### Tall Weeds & Grass

All residents must keep weeds and grass shorter than eight inches in height. Volunteer trees and vegetation as well as uncontrolled brush and woody vines are classified as nuisance weeds and should be removed. Sweeping or blowing lawn and yard debris into the street is prohibited.

### Outdoor Storage (Nuisance)

City Code prohibits rubbish or garbage accumulating on or in any property. This includes but is not limited to: filth, excrement, lumber, tree limbs, wood, glass, rocks, dirt, cans, containers, paper, trash, plastic, petroleum products, Styrofoam, metal, discarded appliances or other household items, or any other offensive or disagreeable thing or substance.

### Trash & Recycling Containers

Trash and recycling should not be placed out earlier than 6:00 PM the night before your scheduled pickup day. Containers when stored should be kept in the garage or behind the front of the home.

### Exterior Maintenance

Property owners should keep all buildings and grounds in a clean, sanitary, and safe condition. This includes keeping exteriors in good repair to prevent declining property values. Neighborhood Services enforces property codes dealing with exterior walls, guttering, roofs, windows, driveways, accessory structures and fences.



### Inoperable Vehicles, Abandoned Vehicles and Parking in the Yard

Property owners should not park any vehicle outdoors when such vehicle is inoperable for any reason. Vehicles must have current registration on the vehicle, be legally street operable, and move every 14 days. Also, vehicles may not be parked in the yard at any time.

If you have questions about Mission's property maintenance codes or would like to report an issue, please feel free to use the "Report a Concern" feature on the City's website at [www.missionks.org](http://www.missionks.org) or contact the Community Development Department at 913.676.8360.

## New Ward I Councilmember Takes Office

In May of 2024, Councilmember Josepha Haden Chomphosy (Ward I) was sworn in to fill a vacancy resulting from the resignation of Hillary Parker Thomas. We wish Hillary and her family the best as they relocate outside of Mission, and thank her for her service to the City during her time on Council. Ms. Haden Chomphosy will serve the balance of the unexpired term, through December 2025.

Born and raised in northwest Arkansas, Josepha is a proud alumna of William Jewell College. After completing her education, she decided to make Kansas City her home, drawn to its vibrant community and opportunities for growth.

Outside of council, Josepha is the Executive Director for WordPress, the world's leading open-source content management system. With a passion for fostering inclusive communities and empowering creators, she leads initiatives to democratize publishing and make the web a more accessible place for all.

Apart from her professional commitments, Josepha finds joy in exploring the local farmers markets and barbecue places with her husband Konstantin and their beloved dog Pepper. Whether enjoying the local cuisine or spending time outdoors, she appreciates the diverse experiences her community offers.

Josepha looks forward to connecting with residents, listening to their voices, and working together to address their needs and concerns effectively. You may reach Councilmember Haden Chomphosy at [jhadenchomphosy@missionks.org](mailto:jhadenchomphosy@missionks.org) or by calling 913.676.8350.



## Go Green! Environmental Fair 2024

The City of Mission is proud to sponsor and host the third annual Go Green! Environmental Fair on Saturday, September 14 from 9:00 a.m.— 12:00 p.m. at the Powell Community Center. This FREE family-friendly environmental fair will show you how taking small steps to reduce your carbon footprint at home, school, and work and will help the environment and save you money. Local businesses and nonprofits will provide information, products and services to help residents or business owners live a more sustainable life.

Exhibitors will lead educational sessions on all sorts of green topics. There will be lots of fun and activities for children, including face painting!

Secure eCycle will be taking old computers and electronics, focusing on laptops, desktops and monitors and recycling them at the event.

Be sure to save the date on your calendar now!







## Memorial Flag Fund

As a tribute to those who have served or are currently serving our country, the City displays American flags along Johnson Drive from Memorial Day through Veterans Day. The flags have been made possible by contributions to Mission's Memorial Flag Fund. You can help continue this proud tradition by making a charitable donation in support of the purchase of future replacement flags. Donations can be made in honor or memory of a veteran or service member, or any person you would like to recognize. You can find more information on the City's website at <https://www.missionks.org/i-want-to/city-programs/memorial-flag-fund/>

## Summer Fun at the Mission Family Aquatic Center!

Make sure to check out the great programming and events in July and August at the MFAC! We can't wait to see you at the pool!

**\$8** Daily Admission

**Special Events**

- June 7** Yoga on Deck 7:30PM | \$15/person
- June 20** World's Largest Swim Lesson 9-11AM | FREE
- June 21** Moonlight Swim (all ages) 7-10PM | \$8/person
- June 29** Adult Moonlight Swim 7-10PM | Movie: The Meg 2 | \$8/person
- July 27** Under the Sea Pool Party 6-10PM | Movie: Shark Tale | \$12/person
- Aug 23** Yoga on Deck & Wine Tasting 7:30PM | \$22/person
- Sept 3** Pool Party for Pooches 5:30-6:15PM (dogs under 25lbs.) 6:30-7:15PM | \$6/dog per session

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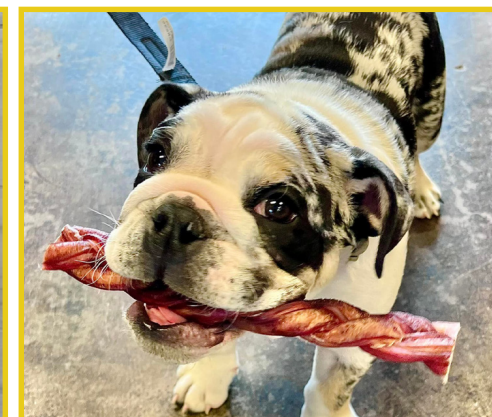


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- Tuesday, July 16**  
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- Wednesday, July 17**  
Advance ballots by mail are transmitted.
- Saturday, July 20**  
In-person advance voting begins.
- Tuesday, July 30**  
Last day to apply for an advance voting by mail ballot.
- Monday, August 5, at noon**  
In-person advance voting ends.
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Trent Boultinghouse has been in correspondence with several MLB players from the 1957 and 1960 season in an effort to collect signed baseball cards.

# HISTORY IN THE CARDS

Unique baseball card collection represents past and future for Mission resident

By Kris Baker • Photos by Kathy DeLorenzo

Traveling around Mission you will find people with a wide range of interests. Arts, animals, television shows, home decor, people can tell their stories in very many different ways. Ward I City Councilmember Trent Boultinghouse likes to tell his story with baseball cards.

Boultinghouse collects baseball cards, but not just any baseball cards. His focus is on collecting the complete sets of Topps trading cards from 1957 and 1960, with many of them signed by the players. The 1957 set marks the first modern

sized baseball cards. Although he has some cards from other years, those two collections have been his focus.

"I liked the look of these cards," Boultinghouse said. "I was corresponding with a man in Florida and he sold me a bunch of his cards from 1957. That really started my collection."

Some of the cards he received were signed. This got Boultinghouse thinking about the players from this era, some famous like Mickey Mantle and Roberto Clemente, some obscure, but each one

with a unique story.

"I had collected baseball cards as a kid, but I had sort of grown out of it," Boultinghouse said. "Like most of us, during the COVID-19 pandemic I had some time and decided to get back into it." Boultinghouse set his sights on getting the complete collections, as well as getting as many autographs as possible. "When I started to get the autographed cards, it reignited my passion," Trent remembers.

He has gotten autographs in a few different ways. He has bought some from

online sellers and collectors. However, his favorite way to secure an autograph is by contacting the player directly.

"I started writing letters, sending them my cards and asking for their autograph," he said. "I was pleasantly surprised when I started getting letters back. Almost everyone I wrote to wrote back."

Boultinghouse says the letters contained stories from the players during their days in the Major Leagues. The letters paint a fascinating picture of the history of baseball from that time.

"It's a thrill to know they are reading my letters, and I appreciate them taking the time to answer me," Boultinghouse said.

Because he is looking for players from 1957 and 1960,

**"The history of baseball is a lot about the history of America. I plan to keep everything, and pass it down to my son if and when he is interested."**  
 --Trent Boultinghouse

Boultinghouse said the most challenging thing about getting all the autographs was simply the passage of time.

"Unfortunately a lot of the players have passed away," he said. "So it kind of became a race against time to track them all down. I started to look at it not as a hobby; I was looking at it like a quest."

And that quest is proving successful. Boultinghouse now has every card from 1957, with 76% of them signed, and has moved on to 1960. He has more than half of the cards from that year signed. Boultinghouse is also collecting a 1970 set from Venezuela.

Among his favorites are some of the lesser-known players. One of his prized possessions is the card of Larry Doby;



Hall of Famer Stan Musial is one of the names on Trent Boultinghouse's St. Louis Cardinals signed team card.

the first black player in the American League, who started eleven months after Jackie Robinson first integrated the sport. Another is Curt Flood who became a civil rights activist in addition to playing for the St. Louis Cardinals.

Boultinghouse said he was always a big baseball fan, first playing t-ball at a young age.

Growing up in southeast Kansas, Boultinghouse met former St. Louis Browns player Don Gutteridge.

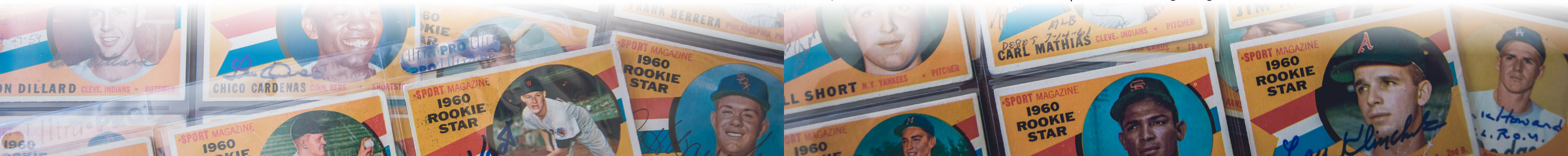
"It was the coolest thing, knowing a big league player. That was my first autographed card," Boultinghouse said.

That card has a lot of sentimental value for Boultinghouse, though he does have some with monetary value. A Walter Johnson card stands out as one of the most valuable in his collection. But Boultinghouse says that's not what interests him and is not why he collects. He mostly treasures the Walter Johnson card because he was a player from southeast Kansas, where Boultinghouse is from.

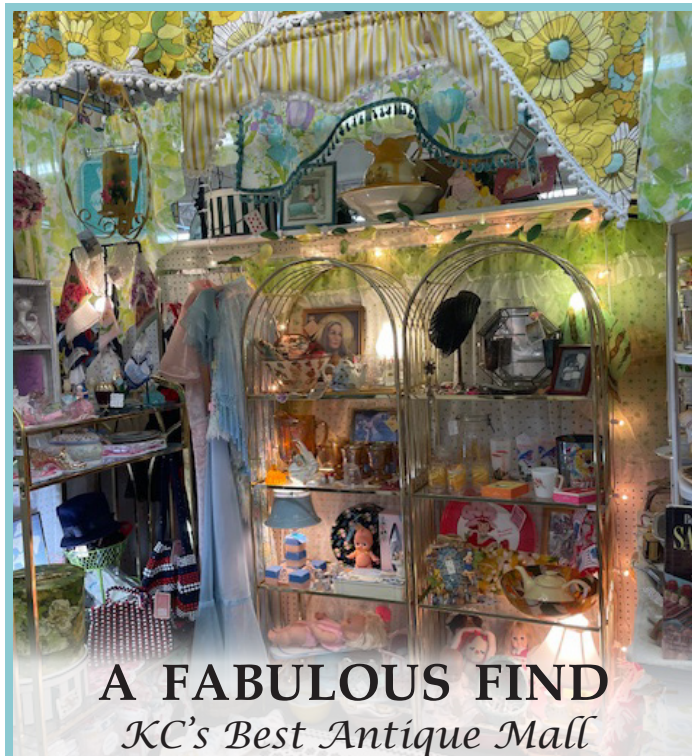
"For me, they are a source of inspiration and joy," he said. "The history of baseball is a lot about the history of America. I plan to keep everything, and pass it down to my son if and when he is interested. That is what baseball is to me, a tradition that is passed down through the generations."



Topps baseball cards from 1957 and 1960 from Boultinghouse's collection.







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Mission artist Susan Speck works in her studio, handbuilding her own creations.

# MISSION ARTIST SUSAN SPECK CRAFTS HANDBUILT, DARK ART

By Kris Baker • Photos by Kathy DeLorenzo

Artists are sometimes known to be a little different. An artist's medium can take many shapes and their work can offer a unique viewpoint, allowing people to see the world in ways they hadn't before; to see things they otherwise wouldn't notice. Susan Speck sees things her own way, and found the perfect way to express her strong, though sometimes eccentric, viewpoint when she first touched clay.

Speck is a Mission artist who creates handbuilt, functional porcelain ware, using both original patterns and vintage molds. To create her work she presses a pre-cut slab of porcelain into the mold and assembles the pot from that and other press molds. She then embellishes with sprigs and underglaze, before glazing and firing the last time.

Speck found, as she worked, her creations took a more macabre leaning.

"I have heard other people call my work whimsical, scary and weird," Speck said. "It may be a little dark, since I like to incorporate skull and bone imagery along with flowers and 'sweet' colors. I also like to use a mold of a screaming baby surrounded by flowers."

The subject of her art has led to a growing interest in Speck's work. This came after years of her carving out her own niche.

## A HANDBUILT ARTIST

Speck was born into a family of artists, so she learned early on what it means to be different. She was around painters, illustrators, wood-carvers, quilters and furniture makers. She knew she wanted to find her own path as others in her family had done. She started with drawing comic strips, but something changed when she got to college.

"I first got serious about ceramics while in school at the University of Missouri-Columbia in the mid-70s," Speck said. "I took as many classes as I could while there and after graduation took community classes."

While in classes, Speck received a tool that has become instrumental in her life. She was sold a home-made kick wheel. That wheel has become a fixture in every place Speck has lived since. Slowly she began applying to art fairs and got in a few in the metro area. In the meantime,



Susan Speck uses her kick wheel to make stand out art like the ones pictured here.



she took a night class at Kansas City Art Institute with pottery instructor Steven Hill. After wrestling with a form, he recommended Speck try handbuilding to accomplish the task. She has been a hand builder ever since.

"I have been a hand builder for a long time, since 1984, to be exact," Speck said. "I have always created functional items for the home. Around 2000 I began creating fat skeletal figures that I call 'Bone Guys' to add to my inventory."

The Bone Guys became a big part of her repertoire. A few years ago Speck attended Arrowmont, a craft school in

Tennessee. There she learned about using molds and surface embellishment in her practice. Speck now uses press molds almost exclusively. She will use vintage plaster molds and molds she created herself. One effective way she has found to make molds is from interesting objects she finds at thrift stores. She will buy an item, then press clay into and onto it to make a mold. Speck will fire them to be able to use them over and over again. She then donates the object back to sell again.

"It used to be patterns and color that inspired me, now it is other 3-dimensional objects," Speck said. "I visit thrift shops to seek out and use those 3-D items to create press molds."

She said something changed in her life when she first touched the clay in class. Speck believed she found a way to mold her life, just as she was molding that soft clay. She now enjoys sharing what she has learned with others. Speck welcomes students into her studio where they learn throwing on a kick wheel or handbuilding, refining and glazing over a course of about five weeks. For those who can't take a class she offers some more advice.

"Find a mentor or take a few classes in business management," Speck said. "An artist really needs to be a business-person as well as a creator."

To see more of Speck's work and learn about her studio visit her website at [susanspeck.com](http://susanspeck.com).



# CALL OF THE WILD

By Kris Baker  
Photos by Kathy Delorenzo



Casey's Auto Repair on Beverly Ave. draws animal visitors each morning. A one-eyed rabbit (pictured below) is one of the Caseys' favorite guests.



Carl Casey carefully fills bird feeders each day.

## LOCAL WILDLIFE VISIT CASEY'S AUTO REPAIR

If you are up before sunrise in Mission you might witness a sight unfolding at Casey's Auto Repair that has been compared by Mission business owner Stoney Bogan as a scene right out of Disney's Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Just like the princess had a host of animal companions come to her, a menagerie of furry and feathered friends gather outside the auto repair shop each week. Passersby may see squirrels, geese, songbirds and rabbits congregating outside the business. The animals seem to instinctively know this is a safe place for them and take advantage of the fresh food put out for them every day.

When Carl Casey arrives at work around 4:15 a.m. each morning, there is more to get ready than the auto bays and tools. He opens the garage doors, greeting birds who have flocked on the power lines eagerly awaiting his arrival. Carl puts out food and water, goes inside and then watches nature take her course.

"We have always loved animals, and try to look after them," Carl said. "Animals are vulnerable... any kind of help can make a big difference."

Carl's wife Cathy agrees. "We like to be

there for all of God's creatures. We have worked a lot with animal rescue, helping to raise money for them, collecting cleaning supplies and other items. It's something that has always been important to us."

This charity began at home when Carl began putting out feed for the local deer. "We had deer come all the time to our house," Carl said. "There were also around 13 raccoons who were attracted to the feed we were putting out. It felt like the right thing to do."

A couple of years ago he began doing the same at work at the auto repair shop. He noticed that a bird's nest kept getting destroyed so Carl built a nest and put it out. Soon several birds had a new home, one that could more readily survive the city environment. He got some more nests, and then started regularly putting out bird seed mix and peanuts. Carl estimates they have at least 50 birds who stop by the shop every day.

In recent months, a couple of new visitors have been dining at Casey's. Geese from down the street started showing up after their home had been destroyed. Along with the geese, one of their "regulars" is a one-



eyed rabbit.

"We named him One-eyed. Pretty original right," Cathy laughed. To the Caseys, One-eyed is a daily reminder of some of the plights these animals face.

"Someone's got to take care of them," Cathy said. "They are a part of our world, so we are happy to help them in any way we can."

Casey's Auto Repair has long been a fixture in Mission and has locations at 5917 Beverly Ave. and 5710 Johnson Dr., both in Mission, Kansas. To learn more about their business visit [caseysautorepair.com](http://caseysautorepair.com).

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# Mission Puts 'Art and Sole' into a World Record

Story by Kate Deacon

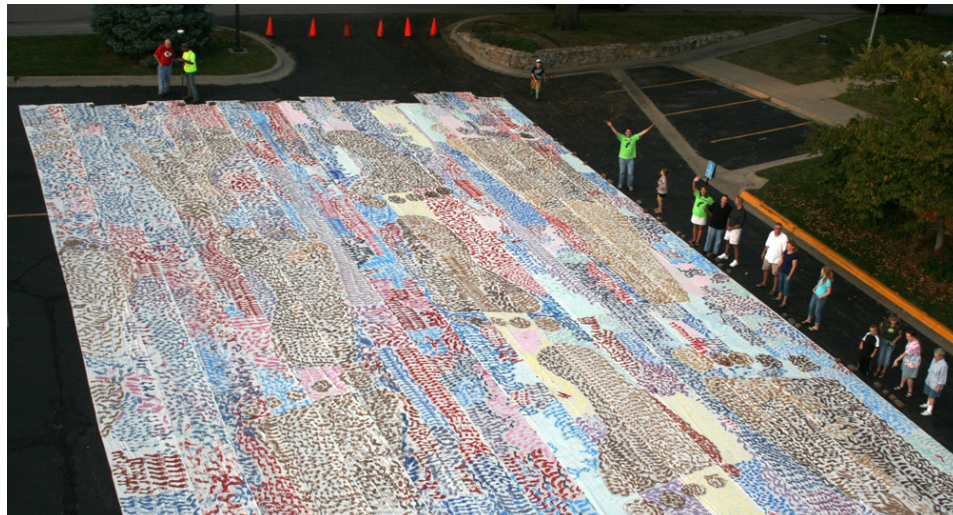
In September of 2009, the Mission community joined together to support a worthy cause, lending a hand (or foot) to create a masterpiece, and helping Mission claim a World Record. Not bad for a Friday afternoon! The goal was to create "The Largest Painting Made with Footprints," painting a canvas of 10,000 sq ft. while raising \$10,000 for Samaritan's Feet, a worldwide organization providing shoes to those in need. Participants were asked to donate \$1 for each footprint or a pair of new shoes.

Josh Rauch, a Mission city intern at the time and current city administrator of Riverside, Ohio, ran with the vision of City Administrator Mike Scanlon, and led the project to successful completion. Josh recently shared his memories of the experience, illustrating that you never know what opportunities in life might have the most lasting impacts.

"So, one day Mike Scanlon calls me into his office and slides a piece of paper across his desk with the words "LARGEST PAINTING MADE WITH FOOTPRINTS." I believe the record attempt was connected with the annual "Spirit of Mission Days" festival, and the charity being promoted that year was Samaritan's Feet, an organization that donated shoes to folks in need. He looked at me and said, "You're going to do this," and then tells the story of his prior effort to secure the Guinness record for the world's largest sidewalk chalk drawing.

Mike gave me a small budget and turned me loose to figure it out. I vividly remember ordering all the supplies, especially rolls and rolls of muslin cloth and leftover paint sourced from the County's household hazardous waste program. I had to come up with a design on my own. Since the festival was shoe-themed and the record involved footprints, I created a design that resembled feet. The design had to be somewhat modular so that if we only finished one foot, we'd still have a complete painting to submit for the record.

I worked with Trinity Lutheran Church to use their parking lot, unrolling the cloths, tracing the designs and preparing them



for painting. We devised a traffic pattern to move people through as quickly as possible, with a foot cleaning station at the end.

The actual day was a blur. I remember it was hot and I was constantly moving. We were fortunate that the community responded, and we had a lot of folks come out to participate in the painting. We had an official adjudicator on site to take measurements, record details and verify a record title. When all was said and done, we received the Guinness award and a plaque for completing the painting that very same day. Afterward, I asked Mike if he'd hire me full time since I'd pulled off a world record as an intern (he did...a few months later).

The irony in all this is that we never actually made it into the Guinness Book, because a couple of months after we set the record, a school in India attempted the

same thing and outdid us by a significant margin. That didn't stop me though...I've listed the world record on my resumes with instructions for folks to call up Mission City Hall if they need proof.

This project was incredibly formative for me. The world record part of it was cool, but I learned a lot about myself in the process. I was given a goal, some tools and challenged to make something happen, and I did it, but I definitely didn't do it alone. The whole experience taught me about teamwork, grit and building relationships to achieve a common goal. The skills forged through this experience (and others like it), taught me to be fearless...to try for big things knowing failure is possible or even likely, while recognizing the value of the process along the way.

As someone just starting out in their career, it was a huge advantage to be challenged in a unique way. There is a lot of value in empowering people to pursue a big goal, and I try to model that as a City Manager in my own community today. I wouldn't have learned those skills without my time in Mission."

As they say, records are made to be broken. While Mission holds the memories of capturing this unique title, as of 2016 the world record for largest painting done by footprint belongs to DBS Bank Hong Kong Limited and measures 25,333.62 ft<sup>2</sup>. Anyone up to the next challenge?



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## Plan Your Next Adventure with Mission Parks + Recreation!



July 13

### Mission Summer Family Picnic

Enjoy the festivities at our annual picnic celebration! Treat yourself to a delicious hot dog dinner while engaging in fun family activities, live music from The Good Sam Club Band, and a vibrant beer garden. Remember to bring your favorite lawn chair or blankets to fully enjoy this fantastic evening of summer fun – and it's all FREE! Conclude the night with a spectacular laser light show.

Broadmoor Park  
**SAT: July 13, 6-10PM**

August 16

### Movie in the Park

Andersen Park Tennis Court  
**FRI: August 16, Dusk**  
Kung Fu Panda 4 (PG)  
FREE



July 27

### Under the Sea Pool Party

MFAC  
**SAT: July 27, 6-10PM**  
Movie: Shark Tale (PG)  
\$12/person

August 23

### Yoga on Deck

MFAC  
**FRI: August 23, 7:30PM**  
\$22/person (includes yoga and wine tasting)

August 30

### Concert in the Park: Vinyl Revival

Broadmoor Park  
Beer garden and food trucks.  
Coolers prohibited  
**FRI: August 30, 6PM**  
FREE

### Celebrating Trees

June – October 2024

Mission will host the "Celebrating Trees" tree drive with a goal of 50+ trees planted. You can participate in three ways:

- Purchase tree(s) at Mission's bulk-discount pricing for residential planting.
- Donate to the Mission Charitable Fund to help replace Mission's tree canopy in one of its parks, which will enter your name for a chance to win a free tree.
- Let us know if you've planted a tree in Mission in 2024.

For more information visit:

<https://www.missionks.org/city-services/sustainable-mission/tree-programs>





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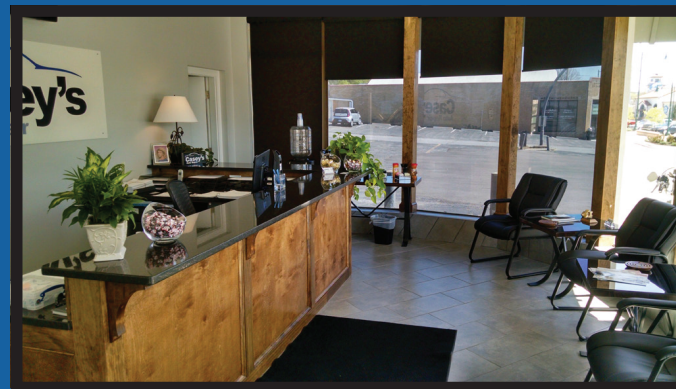
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