



NEWS RELEASE

2025 SMOKY HILL RIVER FESTIVAL DETAILS ANNOUNCED

(Salina, KS 04-25) Salina Arts & Humanities announces details for the 49th Smoky Hill River Festival, scheduled for June 12-15 in Oakdale Park.



The energetic and epic arts party takes place in less than 50 days, including many new food offerings, activities for kids, new roving and mainstage entertainers, new art installations, and new artists selling their work in the arts show.

The Festival Medallion Quest will kick off at 4 pm on Wednesday, May 21, on the front steps of the Smoky Hill Museum. Arts and Humanities Commissioners will reveal the first clue for the \$3,000 prize package. Twice daily, clues will be released at 7:30 am and 4:30 pm until the Medallion is found.

Festival gates will open at 4 pm on Thursday, June 12, with 35 food booths, an art patron party, and the Festival Jam produced by S.M. Hanson Music. Music starts at 5:45 pm and includes 17 bands playing for four hours.

Friday through Sunday, the Smoky Hill River Festival is fully engaged with three stages of live entertainment, the Fine Arts and Craft Show, Artyopolis for kids, and food vendors

“For the last fourteen months, our staff has worked closely with committees, artists, City of Salina staff, and partner organizations to shape the 2025 Festival. The Smoky Hill River Festival is more than an epic celebration of the arts; it’s a place where friendships are made, creativity thrives, and our community grows stronger through connection and shared creative expression,” says Anna Pauscher Morawitz, Operations & Development Manager. “We look forward to seeing everyone in the park!”

RELEASE DATE:
Immediate

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DATE SUBMITTED:
April 24, 2025

Discover New Music for All Ages

Festival entertainment comes from the finest in the region, nation, and beyond. A wide variety of musical styles are represented with performances ranging from the familiar to the unconventional.

Headliners include:

- The Freedom Affair (Friday)
- My Son the Hurricane (Saturday)
- Carswell & Hope (Sunday)

New acts this year:

- The Animeros
- Jon Muq
- The Matchsellers
- Me Like Bees
- The Swallowtails
- Willy Vela Y Sus Aquillos



See acts from familiar faces and more at www.riverfestival.com/.

“We have a mix of familiar faces joining brand new acts this year. The music will have something for everyone, for those who enjoy sitting and listening to those who enjoy dancing along with the performers,” says Sarah Keck, Entertainment Coordinator.

Visual Surprises at Every Turn

Visual artists from 21 states come to the Festival to sell, demonstrate, and install their work. This once-a-year opportunity to purchase original artwork from more than 125 visual artists is a unique chance to meet the creators and learn about their processes. This year will be the Smoky Hill River Festival debut for 52 artists throughout the show and Art Demonstration areas.

“This season always feels like the perfect storm: chaos, excitement, hard work, and most importantly, abundant creativity. There is an undeniable energy that surrounds the work everyone is putting in and what comes to fruition in Oakdale Park,” says Crystal



Hammerschmidt, Visual Arts Coordinator.

Art Patron Program - The Festival’s Art Patron Program offers art lovers and collectors a chance to sign up for special perks, including admission to the Thursday night Premiere party, a Friday morning art show shopping preview hour, and more. Visiting artists are interested in shows with a history of community support and committed art patronage. Artists can thrive with the support of enthusiastic and knowledgeable customers, and the hospitality at our event makes all the difference to their experience. Become an Art Patron by May 22 and show your support by registering at <https://www.riverfestival.com/patron/> or calling 785-309-5770.

Immersive Art Installations - More than 20 site-specific outdoor Art Installations will surprise Festival-goers around every corner across Oakdale Park. New Art Installations include:

- “Salina Downtown Inc. Trash Corral Collaboration” by Mindy Allen
- “Tool trailer mural” by Scribe
- “Crazy Cool Crochet” by Tamara Kingery-Gonzales
- “Who Let the Dogs Out” by Juniper “TJ” Tangpuz
- “Twisted Tornado” by Margaret Craig



Festival Print - The commissioned Festival Print is by Lawrence, KS, artist Nick Perry of Red Legger Studio. With a foundation rooted in drawing and printmaking, he works in an illustrative, semi-psychedelic style of pop surrealism. Anyone who donates \$100 or more can pick up a print at the Salina Arts & Humanities office before June 10.

Festival T-shirt - This year’s t-shirt design features the design work of Paul Punzo of Lawrence, KS. His original artwork incorporates rich red brushstrokes as the background with stencil and relief cut printmaking techniques to create a familiar Festival landscape design within the shape of a guitar.



Artyopolis – Fun for Kids and Kids at Heart

The Artyopolis area is a festival in itself! It features Creation Crossing make-and-take crafts, Button Boulevard, an artistically improved Game Street, Lego Lane, Paintchoo Plaza, Arty’s Stage acts, and more. Artyopolis hours are Friday through Saturday, 10 am to 6 pm, and Sunday, 12 pm to 4 pm.

On Saturday, June 14, kids and families will rush into the park when the gates open to get a spot at First Treasures, a special patron tent for kids 4-13 years old. Participants can select hundreds of items priced from \$1 to \$5, provided by exhibiting artists.

“Kids will get to experience hands-on activities in Creation Crossing while having their own entertainment at Arty’s Stage, with performers like Duke Otherwise and Count Everyone. I also love supporting young collectors with purchasing their art in First Treasures on the Saturday of Festival,” says Allie Fischer, Artyopolis Coordinator.

Festival Food – Enjoy New and Nostalgic Food

Taste buds, get ready to party! We're jazzing up the culinary scene with 7 fantastic new food vendors. Whether you're craving some mouth-watering Korean Corn Dogs, sizzling Teriyaki Steak and Chicken on-a-stick, authentic carne adovada street tacos, or the playful crunch of roasted spicy peanuts, there's something for every foodie. And let's not forget the indulgently delightful fried Oreos or new whimsical drinks—a Cotton Candy Bomb or a Sour Gummy Surprise, anyone? Dive into these exciting flavors and bring

your appetite for a delicious experience. See the complete list of food vendors on www.riverfestival.com.

“I’m excited about the Korean corn dogs, it’s a delightful new twist for our event. We are also thrilled to include birria tacos and ice cream nachos! There is a little something for everyone,” says Maira Mota, Food Coordinator.

Make a difference – Volunteer for More Festival Fun

The Festival relies on approximately 2,000 volunteers each year. Volunteers can help in Artyopolis, artist hospitality, technical areas, and at the gates. Learn more and sign up online at <https://salinaareunitedway.volunteerlocal.com/volunteer/?id=87807>.

Smoky Hill River Run

On the morning of Saturday, June 14, the Salina Regional Health Center will host the 44th Smoky Hill River Run. The event includes a two-mile walk, children’s races, and a two-mile and five-mile electronically timed race. Register online at <https://srhc.com/riverrun/>.

Sunday at the Festival – Chill Out with Fewer Crowds

Sunday, June 15, includes a robust music lineup, a less hectic environment, and a unique scavenger hunt featuring plastic flower seeds that will be hidden on the Festival grounds and ready to be removed from the environment before they spread uncontrollably! The “seeds” are handmade by Margaret Craig, a Festival Installation artist, and will be released into the wild on Sunday, throughout the day, but you will be able to see them in full bloom near the demonstration area Friday and Saturday at the “Setting Seed” installation near the art demonstration area.



Admission to the River Festival is by weekend wristband (\$15 in advance, \$20 at the gate) available in many local locations and regional cities starting Wednesday, May 1, or by daily wristband (\$10, sold only at the gate). Children 11 and under get in free. See a list of all local or regional wristband retailers by May 1 at <https://www.riverfestival.com/participating-retailers/>. General Festival hours are Thursday, June 12, from 4 pm to 10 pm, Friday and Saturday, from 10 am to 10 pm, and Sunday, June 15, from 10 am to 4 pm.

For more information and details or to see volunteer opportunities, visit www.riverfestival.com or call 785-309-5770.

For needed accommodations, please call Amanda Morris at Salina Arts & Humanities at 785-309-5770 between 8:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Thursday. Every effort will be made to accommodate known disabilities. For material or speech access, please call at least five working days before the event. Salina Arts & Humanities, a department of the City of Salina, has served a unique role as an arts advocate and resource partner since 1966. The Smoky Hill River Festival, Horizons Grants Program, Smoky Hill Museum, Arts Infusion Program in schools, Community Art & Design, and Creative Connections are among the programs of Salina Arts & Humanities, located at 211 W. Iron Avenue in Salina.

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