



Holiday Holyoke pops up for last minute shopping

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Reminder Publications photo by G. Michael Dobbs

By G. Michael Dobbs

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HOLYOKE – In a former bank building, local artists are displaying dozens of gift ideas for Christmas – but not for long.

Holiday Holyoke, a pop up store, will be open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Dec. 20 to 23.

Store Manager Cynthia Espinosa explained to Reminder Publications that this was the second year for the store and hopes the success of the pop up – or temporary – location would lead to a permanent year-round store.

The store opened on Black Friday and Espinosa said the “business has been good.”

She added, “People are learning about it.”

The Holyoke Creative Arts is the fiscal agent making the store possible while the Massachusetts International Festival of the Arts assisted in finding the site for the store, Espinosa said.

Thirty artists and their work are featured in the store and majority of them are from Holyoke, she said. The variety of items ranges from paintings, sculpture, jewelry photography, greeting cards, scarves, hats and soap.

Kwon Grafix Designs is one of the artists at the store. “My art come from the love of urban graffiti. I started doing graffiti back in the late 70s and early 80s when the Hip Hop Movement first started. I found the unorthodox type of art without boundaries to be my favorite. I never stopped creating. Now my art is making its way into the homes of many (graffiti and non-graffiti),” he wrote.

Contemporary jewelry artist Angela Gerhard, whose work has garnered national attention, is another of the artists at the store. It contrasts with the jewelry work of Geeky Bling, described as combination of “geek culture and high fashion.”

Carol Soules and Jesse Greene describe themselves as “a mother and daughter team with hand silk screened T-shirts and hoodies, necklaces, magnets, and message in a bottle ornaments.”

A special event on the last weekend of the store will be pastel portraits by Debra Dunphy at noon. Dunphy will be charging \$50 for a 20-minute sitting or a portrait from a photo.

For more information on the shop go to its Facebook page at www.facebook.com/HolidayHolyoke.



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