

A GUIDE TO
ART + CULTURE



2025 - 2026

WELCOME TO EFFINGHAM!

The City of Effingham is proud to be an arts-friendly community.

We welcome guests and residents to explore our local cultural outlets!

Whether you're catching a live show at the Effingham Performance Center, viewing a sculpture along our avenues or touring a local gallery, you're sure to find inspiration and creativity around every corner in Effingham...

Enjoy your visit!



Jodi Thoele
Director of Tourism
Visit Effingham

VISIT EFFINGHAM

201 E. Jefferson Ave.
Effingham, IL 62401

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Toll Free | 800.772.0750
Phone | 217.342.5310
Fax | 217.342.4939

Email | effinghamsculptures@gmail.com
Website | visiteffinghamil.com

SOCIAL MEDIA

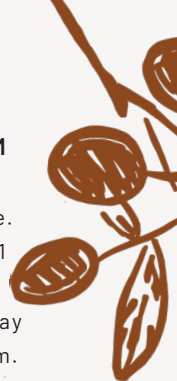
FACEBOOK
facebook.com/visiteffingham

INSTAGRAM
[visiteffingham](https://www.instagram.com/visiteffingham)

YOUTUBE
[@EffinghamTourism](https://www.youtube.com/EffinghamTourism)



enjoy
illinois





INSIDE THE GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SCULPTURES - P 2

Learn details about the exhibit, including background on the artists and what inspired each piece. Map on page 4.

EVENTS, FAIRS + MARKETS - P 34

Celebrate local makers at one of our artisan-centered community events. Discover artisan goods + local talent, right here in Effingham!

FARMERS + MAKERS - P 36

Nourish yourself - mind, body and soul - through locally-grown produce and handcrafted meals. Learn more about our Illinois Makers, as well!

EXHIBITIONS + GALLERIES - P 42

Enjoy nearby exhibitions and browse local galleries at your leisure.

THEATER + PERFORMANCE - P 44

Take in a show at the local performing arts theater! Find out where you can see art come to life in the City of Effingham.

MADE IN EFFINGHAM - P 45

Learn more about locally-made artisan goods and where you can find them, here.



WALK OUR GALLERY

These sculptures, which bring life to the streets of Effingham, were created by some of the Midwest's most well-known sculptors (and some of its best-kept secrets, as well). Each one is part of the annual Sculptures on the Avenues outdoor exhibition.

Celebrating its 27th year, Sculptures on the Avenues is a self-guided walking tour that winds in and out of the Downtown Effingham area, stopping at City Hall.

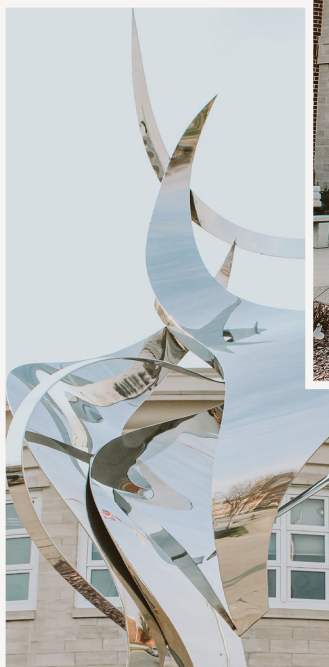
Pause here, at 201 E. Jefferson Avenue, to view the piece that started it all... the "Flame of Hope."

We encourage you to visit and discover all of the incredible sculptures that have transformed the City's avenues into an outdoor, walkable art gallery!



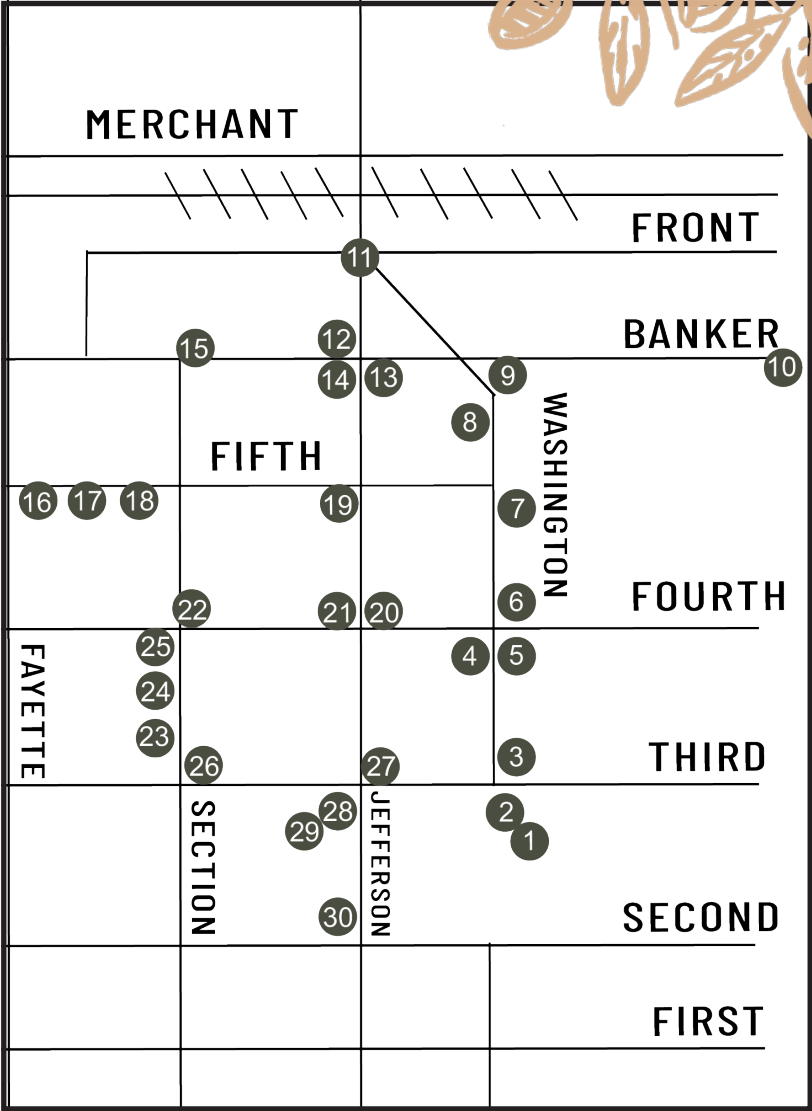


the flame of hope



In 1997, the Effingham Community Committee for the Arts commissioned Leonardo Nierman's "Flame of Hope," which continues to be the focal point of the sculpture exhibition.

take a tour...



BEGIN YOUR TOUR AT:
THE EFFINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
200 N. THIRD ST.

SCULPTURES

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. SUNSET/ GREEN FLASH | 18. DANCER 1 |
| 2. CASTLES LEFT STANDING
I + II | 19. ACCORDION PUMP |
| 3. MAN O' WAR | 20. NUMBER 2 |
| 4. PORTAL | 21. NIGHT FLAME |
| 5. LA FORNARINA2 | 22. ATOP THE WHIRLWIND |
| 6. QUILTED PASSING | 23. YOU |
| 7. WILDCATTERS' GAMBLE | 24. HOLD |
| 8. ARLES 3 | 25. PEACE |
| 9. WHEN A MAN'S AN
EMPTY KETTLE | 26. INTERTANGLED
(THE MYSTERY OF OIL) |
| 10. RIVER MOON | 27. GRACE |
| 11. 2025 CIRCUS | 28. FLAME OF HOPE
(PERMANENT) |
| 12. CLOUD FORM | 29. BALANCING BOY & JOY
(PERMANENT) |
| 13. NUMBER 3 | 30. BEST FRIENDS
(PERMANENT) |
| 14. ECHOES OF THE PAST | |
| 15. THREE POINT ONE | |
| 16. DANCER 2 | |
| 17. THE STAR | |

SUNSET /
GREEN FLASH
NIK ALWERDT | ALTAMONT, IL



This installation reimagines the fleeting beauty of a sunset through the rigid, utilitarian form of traffic cones - symbols of control and order - inviting viewers to find color, emotion and impermanence in the most unexpected materials.



Castles Left Standing I & II

E. HOLLINSHEAD STEAD, OF NEWTON, IL

"I was thinking about the forms of sandcastles, which crumble away nearly instantly, and also the incredible lasting power of cliff dwellings and other ancient houses made of earthen materials, some of which have stood for a shockingly long time... Inside is a core of dirt, scattered with seeds which I hope will grow and add something to the piece that is not fully in my control... It captures the idea of trying to make something lasting, but never really knowing what of your creations will stand up to time..."



" M A N O ' W A R "

GREGORY MENDEZ | DECATUR, IN

IN COLLABORATION WITH ARTIST, NEIL WIFFILL

Man O' War are propelled by wind and ocean currents.

This sculpture is a study in both subtle and
implied movement.



"Portal"



"Where might you end up if you
walked through the door?"

ALEX MENDEZ
DECATUR, IN



" L A F O R N A R I N A 2 "

GARY MITCHELL | ST. LOUIS, MO



"I am interested in connecting to forms of antique Roman and Greek sculptures."

This piece was inspired by the young woman thought to be Raphael's muse.

The form of
this sculpture
is inspired
by an hourglass.

The pattern
suggests
the passing of
time.



Quilted Passing

MATT BOONSTRA
CENTRAL IL





WILDCATTERS' GAMBLE

GARY AUERSWALD
ST. FRANCISVILLE, IL

"The Wildcatters' Gamble serves as both a historical homage and a testament to the enduring spirit of those who dared to drill, shaping the landscape and industry of the region."

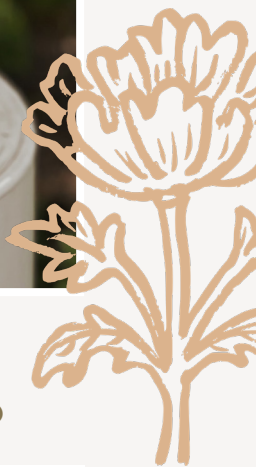




ARLES 3

GARY MITCHELL | ST. LOUIS, MO

My sculptures are designed to inform, delight and beautify. My material of aluminum sheet metal comes from the aircraft industry.



WHEN A MAN'S AN EMPTY KETTLE

ANDREW ARVANETES | KANKAKEE, IL



"Because of my formal approach to fabrication, rational functionality might be expected. On the contrary, the combination of physical scale, personal references and visual details often results in a whimsical and absurd reality... The sculpture's title is taken from a line in the Harold Arlen song from the film, 'The Wizard of Oz.' I have been fascinated with the film since childhood and this is one of numerous sculptures I have created that pays tribute to this experience."



"River Moon"



" My studio is next to a big River. I don't know how many times I've watched the moon rise up over that River's undulating waves. I never get tired of seeing it. This is my rendition of the that scene."



V. SKIP WILLITS
CAMANCHE, IA



" 2 0 2 5 C I R C U S "

NIK ALWERDT | ALTAMONT, IL

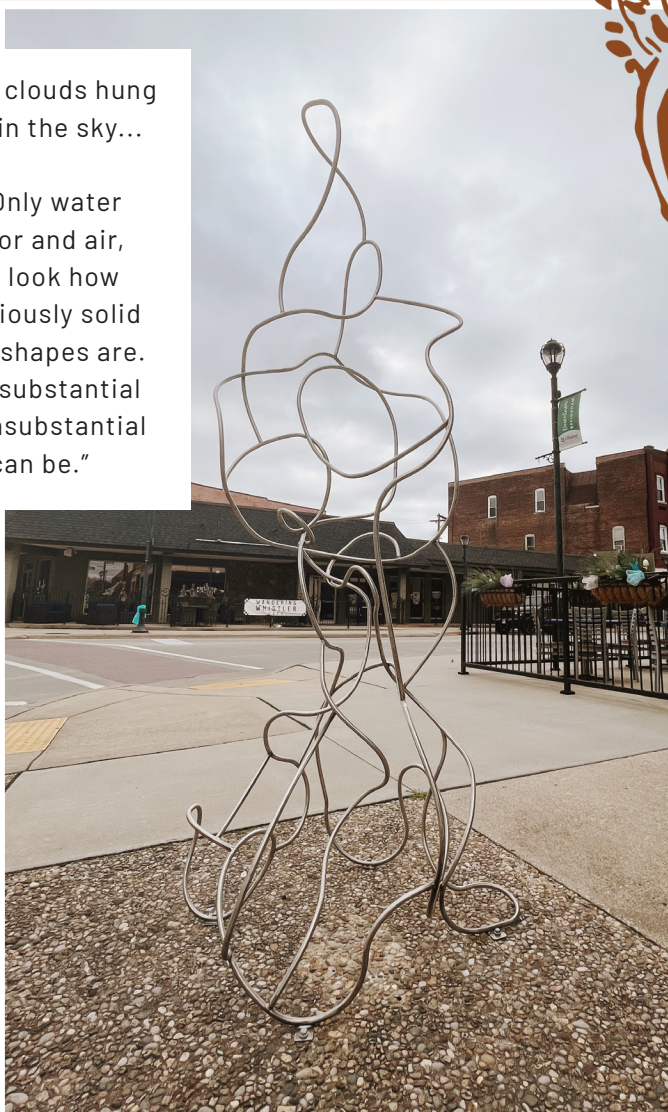
A vibrant totem pole that satirizes the spectacle of modern life, reminding us that even in disorder, there's magic, mischief and meaning.

Cloud Form

V. SKIP WILLITS
CAMANCHE, IA

"Puffy clouds hung
high in the sky...

...Only water
vapor and air,
but look how
deliciously solid
their shapes are.
How substantial
the insubstantial
can be."



"NUMBER 3"

ALDON ADDINGTON | CARBONDALE, IL



*Repurposed steel will wind your thoughts
in unexpected directions...*

*"What have we here? That is for you, the viewer, to interpret.
Is it about smoothness and roughness, circular and
raggedness, darkness and light? There is no answer."*

This sculpture weaves together the timeless mystique of Arthurian legend with the visual language of contemporary pop culture, transforming the sword in the stone into a modern relic - an emblem of the enduring search for meaning in both the heroic and the everyday.



Echoes of the Past

GREGORY MENDEZ
DECATUR, IN





don't forget - snap a photo!



Share your #SculpturesontheAvenues experience with us by tagging us @VisitEffingham or using our hashtag! Your photo might end up featured in one of our guides.



THREE POINT ONE

ALEX MENDEZ

DECATUR, IN



"The Route to a Circle..."



a Series by Todd Kingery

This trio of sculptures captures the ephemeral grace of dancers in motion—each figure a tribute to movement, rhythm and nature's quiet elegance, with “the star” embodying the fleeting brilliance of a moment in the spotlight.

Dancer 1



The Star



Dancer 2
TODD KINGERY
EDGEWOOD, IL



ACCORDION PUMP

MATT MOYER
COLUMBIA, MO



"Accordion Pump" continues my exploration of the overlooked presence of pumps in both industry and daily life.

With its bold blue and white stripes and arched form, the sculpture transforms a utilitarian mechanism into a striking visual rhythm - symbolizing the unseen forces that sustain us and reimagining the functional as something almost whimsical and ceremonial.



ALDON ADDINGTON
CARBONDALE, IL

*Repurposed
stainless steel
follows many
directions,
many paths.*





" N I G H T F L A M E "

NIK ALWERDT | ALTAMONT, IL

"Night Flame" rises in a rhythmic array of bars wrapped in reflective color, capturing the flicker and pulse of light in darkness.

Atop the Whirlwind

GREGORY MENDEZ
DECATUR, IN

The
whirlwind
pirouettes.



a Series by Drew Hanfland

"This three-part exhibition titled, 'You Hold Peace,' features three oversized hands, emerging from a personified Earth to provide a calming, though prominent call-to-action in this life...

Separately, they represent little.
In unison, they hold great power."



YOU





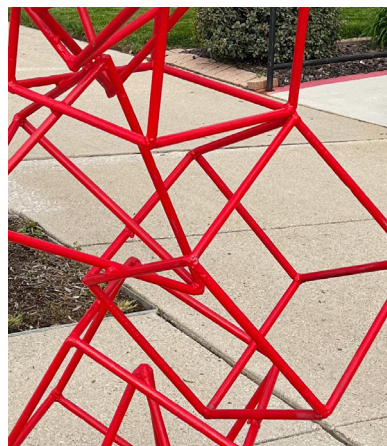
HOLD



PEACE

DREW HANFLAND
EFFINGHAM, IL





I N T E R T A N G L E D :
T H E M Y S T E R Y O F O I L
GARY AUERSWALD
ST. FRANCISVILLE, IL

Crafted from rods once buried deep in an oil well, this sculpture reflects the complex web of power entangled in oil production. As oil rises from the earth, so too do the competing interests of corporations, governments and communities – all seeking control and influence.

The rods, worn by time and use, speak to the industry's long, turbulent history.

Interwoven cubes and pyramids of varying sizes represent the players in this system—some dominant, others marginalized – arranged in a jumbled structure that contrasts geometric order with chaotic overlap. The piece invites viewers to question who truly holds power, who is left out and what the deeper costs are in this intricate, interdependent industry.

GRACE

GARY MITCHELL | ST. LOUIS, MO

'Grace' finds a fitting home outside the historic Heart Theatre. Here, she stands not just as a symbol of cinematic grace, but as a spirit returned to the stage where stories like hers belong.





THE LEONARDO NIERMAN AWARD

Each year,
the City of Effingham's
residents and visitors
vote for their
favorite work of art
in our annual
Sculptures on the Avenues
program.

At the end of each
year's exhibition,
the artist with the most
votes is awarded the
Leonardo Nierman Award.

To participate in this
year's voting process,
scan the QR code, below:



2024



"word" by Darin Shumaker



2023



2022

FAIRS, MARKETS AND FESTIVALS

you won't want to miss!



EFFINGHAM FARMERS MARKET

May through October 2025
See page 36 for more detail.

HAZEL-JAYNE'S MAGIC & MISCHIEF: A FAIRY MARKET

June 7, 2025

A magical, family-friendly event showcasing a variety of artisan vendors, musicians and other unique talent.

MOCCASIN CREEK FESTIVAL

June 19-22, 2025

An annual 4-day music festival focusing on "Americana" music and bringing together musicians, festival families, craftspeople, tradespeople and music-lovers of all types.

EFFINGHAM ARTISAN FAIR

July 11 & 12, 2025

See the adjacent page for more detail.

SUMMER SUNDOWN MUSIC FESTIVAL

September 12-14, 2025

An annual 3-day music festival focusing on the music makers and music lovers of Central Illinois and beyond.



ANNUAL ARTISAN FAIR



Photo by Astrid Johana Photography

*July 11 & 12, 2025
Tuscan Hills Winery
Exit 162*

The Annual Artisan Fair will include work from 50 unique regional artists and makers!

This year, at its scenic location - Tuscan Hills Winery - you'll find everything from ceramics to macrame, paintings, jewelry and more!

These artisan goods will be displayed both for purchase and for viewing.

Enjoy live music, kids' activities, food trucks and, of course, fine wines and spirits!

Bring the entire family to this vibrant event, and soak in a beautiful weekend, celebrating the arts in Effingham.

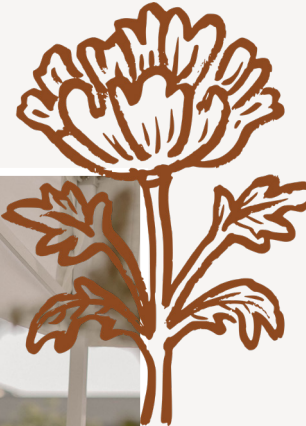
For more information and an updated schedule, visit www.effinghamartisanfair.org.



Photo by Astrid Johana Photography



Effingham Farmers Market





Effingham Farmers Market
Downtown Effingham
Exit 159

The Effingham Farmers Market provides our community with fresh, locally-grown food, locally-made artwork, live music and quality artisan goods.

Everything at the market is produced right here in our region!

Support our community -- and your health -- by buying local at the Effingham Farmers Market!

Visit every Saturday morning from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Downtown Effingham on the courthouse lawn, from May through October.

For more information, email effinghamfarmersmarket@gmail.com.

PHOTO CREDIT: ASTRID JOHANA PHOTOGRAPHY



Heartland Health Food

Heartland Health Foods exists to serve those who seek healthier and more nutritious products than you can find at most grocery stores.

Heartland carries a wide array of natural and organic items, including: produce, snacks, nuts, juices, entrees, baking goods, vegetarian and vegan meat replacements, gluten-free items, baby items, gelatin-free supplements and vitamins, cleaning supplies and more.

Find locally-grown, fresh produce here, when in season, as well! Visit www.heartlandhealthyfoods.com for more information, and be sure to follow them on Facebook and Instagram at: [@heartlandhealthfoods](https://www.facebook.com/heartlandhealthfoods)



FIREFLY GRILL

ILLINOIS MAKER



"Firefly Grill is like that much-loved relative who is always in charge of throwing the family dinners for extended family - except the food tastes better."

Firefly Grill is an award-winning, eco-friendly roadhouse on the shores of Lake Kristie. Chef Niall Campbell and his wife Kristie own and operate this oasis of farm to table cuisine in the heart of the Midwest.



Firefly's ever-changing menu boasts soulful, American-fresh cuisine. Firefly is so passionate about sourcing the best ingredients that they grow many themselves in their on-site, beyond-organic farm.



What they can't grow themselves, they source locally from artisan farmers and foragers. Reserve your table at www.ffgrill.com/reservations.





JOE SIPPERS CAFE

ILLINOIS MAKER



"In a culture where convenience is king, quality is often sacrificed. While efficiency is important, Joe Sippers Cafe has a high regard for craftsmanship and tradition."

Enjoy a hand-brewed coffee or tea or perhaps a local favorite, Blackberries & Cream Latte.

In the kitchen the team at Joe Sippers Cafe makes, bakes, and creates what they can with quality ingredients like local stone-ground flour, local free-range eggs, all-natural deli meats, and lofty portions of nutritious produce.

Joe Sippers Cafe invite you to stop in, check out the goods, and enjoy your cafe experience!

WWW.JOESIPPERS.COM



"The world's most celebrated chefs do their best carving and chopping on hardwood boards handcrafted in Effingham, IL."

Known for their BOOS BLOCKS cutting boards, crafted of solid quality American Hardwoods (maple, walnut and cherry), John Boos products can be seen on major cooking shows, including Chopped, Masterchef and The Kitchen, and they are used by chefs and celebs, too!

John Boos & Co. is a leader in manufacturing butcher block prep surfaces for celeb chefs and foodies (cutting boards, butcher blocks, countertops, kitchen carts and prep tables), as well as custom fabricated stainless steel equipment for the food service industry (chef counters, compartment sinks, work tables and more).

John Boos is the only company in the U.S. that has a wood and metal facility on location. Boos has been in continuous business since 1887 and is the oldest industry in Effingham.

Find out more at www.butcherblockspecialist.com.



J O H N B O O S & C O .

ILLINOIS MAKER

EFFINGHAM ART GUILD

The Effingham Art Guild is home to dozens of award-winning artists. The Art Guild has traveling exhibitions that are open to the public at different locations in the community. The exhibits change every four months and can be found at the locations, listed below. Email effinghamart@gmail.com for more information.

SARAH BUSH LINCOLN
BONUTTI CLINIC
1303 W. EVERGREEN
AVE.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY
COURTHOUSE MUSEUM
100 E. JEFFERSON AVE.

EFFINGHAM SURGICAL
ASSOCIATES SC
900 W. TEMPLE AVE. #101

HEARTLAND HUMAN
SERVICES
1200 N. 4TH ST.

EFFINGHAM
PERFORMANCE CENTER
1325 OUTER BELT WEST

EFFINGHAM
PUBLIC LIBRARY
200 N. THIRD ST.

JOE SIPPERS CAFE
114 S. FOURTH ST.

Effingham is home to a vibrant collection of murals that bring our Midwestern culture to life.

Murals in Effingham

From colorful tributes to local heritage, to whimsical photo ops, share your mural moments with us by tagging @visiteffingham on social media. Your photo might just be featured in next year's guide!

Downtown Effingham,
Exit 159





Alwerdt Artworks Sculpture Park

3238 E. 800th Ave. | Altamont, IL

Life-long artist, Nik Alwerdt, (featured on pages 6, 16 & 26) is the founder of Alwerdt Artwork Sculpture Park.

Founded in 2017, near a newly-renovated one-and-a-half acre farm pond, the Alwerdt Artworks Sculpture Park is open to the public, from sunrise to sunset, year-round. Enjoy a relaxing outdoor experience, viewing 33 sculptures (and growing!) from local and Midwestern-based artists while walking the half-mile path around the pond.

Featured artists include: Aldon Addington - IL, Nik Alwerdt - IL, Jim LaPaso - TX, Todd Kingery - IL, Thomas Horn - IL and April Luchtefeld - IL.

618.322.5798 | www.alwerdtartworks.com



EFFINGHAM PERFORMANCE CENTER

*1325 Outer Belt West
Exit 160*



The Effingham Performance Center is a 1,518-seat, live performance theater that hosts more than 30 performances a year. Several nationally-recognized performers have taken the stage at the theater, including Terri Clark, Kenny G., Great White & Slaughter and Randy Travis. Each year, like the years before, the EPC brings amazing acts and incredible talent...

Come see a show soon!

217.540.2788
www.TheEPC.org



F.A.C.E.

F.A.C.E. is a not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to enrich, educate and entertain our community by providing superior theatrical, musical and choral experiences for both participants and audiences. Visit www.effinghamface.com for more information!



Made in Effingham

#MadeinEffingham highlights our local makers - those in Effingham County who use local resources for their art.

Whether they craft, paint, sculpt, brew, cook with locally sourced foods or anything in between, we're proud to support those who help make Effingham the vibrant and extraordinary community that it is!

If you feel you may be one of our Effingham Makers and would like to be part of this prestigious program, check out our website for more information:
www.visiteffinghamil.com.

Not a maker? You can still get involved! Share your interactions with local makers by using the hashtag "#MadeinEffingham" on social media.

We love hearing about your experiences with the individuals and businesses that make Effingham unique!





ARLES 3
ARTIST: GARY MITCHELL

Effingham
CONVENTION &
VISITORS BUREAU