

A Long List of Thank You's

We couldn't have done the Great American Market without YOU...



Each year during the Great American Market, individuals generally walk up to staff members and say "thank you", "congratulations" or "good job". Although we appreciate the praise, it is important during these larger events to understand the complexity of the planning process and the partnerships formed to carry out the immense task of completing an event the size of the Great American Market. No one puts on an event with over 3,000 people attending on their own, and we want you to know who is helping your community grow and prosper with these large activities.

[Click HERE for the event photo album.](#)

The Emporia Gazette. Before there was a Great American Market, there was a Great American Flea Market. This promotional event was developed and carried out by The Emporia Gazette staff. Eventually, they decided to transition the event over to Emporia Main Street with the understanding that they would be the event's media sponsor. The Emporia Gazette dedicates a massive amount of advertising to this event, and they include a lot of marketing man hours to ensure the success of the Great American Market. In several communities, media takes a decidedly passive role when it comes to community events and activities, but we are blessed with a news organization that actively pursues partnerships in an effort to draw people into this community. We are not exaggerating when we say the Great American Market could not happen without the support of the Emporia Gazette, and the 3,000 + people in attendance at the Market are a solid reminder of the strength of the Emporia Gazette's marketing power.



Emporia Main Street Volunteers. Who sacrifices several hours the Wednesday evening prior to the market to clean up the downtown? Who works several more hour the day before the Market to post signs, mark booth spaces and place caution tape? Who shows up starting at just after 3:00 a.m. the day of the Market to arrange vendors, check people in, pull barricades and ensure the Market starts in an orderly fashion? Who cleans up after the Market and takes care of any problems that occur during the market? Who runs the Car/Truck/Motorcycle show? Volunteers do! The McAnarney Family, Joyce & Conrad Wempe, Rob Gilligan, Anne Orender, Amy Becker, Kathy Fuller, Erin Woods, Kristi Mohn,

Bobby Thompson, Rachael LeClear, Sandra Timmons, Tracey & Steve Graham, Smitty Smith, Yvonne Pool, Steve Hanschu, Emporia High School Future Business Leaders of America and a host of other Emporia Main Street volunteers make the Great American Market possible. **A special "Thank You" goes out to Cooper Carts for use of their golf carts during the event and City Commissioner Kevin Nelson for use of his building to store the carts before and after the event. Thank you to the Emporia Rec Commission for use of thier "chalk machines" to designate booth spaces.**

Public Works. Whether it is delivering barricades, dropping off and picking up trash receptacles or making sure we have appropriate street signs, the Public Works department of the City of Emporia provides the backbone of large events. Without them, outdoor events would be littered and traffic would intermingle with pedestrians (not good).

The Emporia Police Department- When we submitted the event form for the Great American Market in May, the collection agency was the Emporia Police Department. They secured the Highway 99 (Commercial Street) closure. They pulled barriers EARLY Saturday morning. They called in straggler cars and trucks to get vehicles moved without requiring a tow. They dealt with at least one rather difficult "gentleman" who dodged barricades with his truck and decided to park in a rather unusual position. The Emporia Police Department supplied officers for security, signs for lamp posts and contacted local radio stations to remind individuals not to park on certain areas of Commercial Street after 3:00 a.m.



Facilities Management- Ed Rathke and his crew do a fantastic job with White Auditorium, but they also help out with events like the Great American Market. Several vendors require electricity for their booths at the Great American Market, and Ed's crew tests the electricity at the light poles to ensure that everyone has access. Without their contribution, several vendors could not participate in the Great American Market, and the event would be significantly smaller.

The Emporia Fire Department-



In years of extreme heat, EMT's are on the spot taking care of people that get overheated. At a moment's notice, Emporia crews are on the scene helping wherever needed. In the last few years, the Fire Department has utilized the Great American Market as a way to showcase what they do and educate the public about fire safety. Children put out a play "house fire", while others experienced just how difficult working with fire equipment is during the Fireman's Muster. [Click HERE to watch the Fireman's Muster Video.](#)

Local Media- The Emporia Gazette leads the way in marketing for the Great American Market, but that doesn't mean that other media isn't involved. Every single local media outlet in some shape or form helped promote aspects of the Great American Market, and some, like

Emporia's Radio Stations and the Shopper, dedicated staff to help work different portions of the event.

Auto Enthusiasts- Conrad Wempe and Rick Geiger work together to put on the Car/Truck/Motorcycle Show, but the event also requires several community sponsors. Best Engine was sponsored by Flint Hills Laser Expressions, Best "Rat Rod" was sponsored by IM Design, The "Commissioners Choice" was sponsored by Emporia Main Street, Best Mopar was sponsored by Emporia Motors, Best GM was sponsored by Longbine Auto Plaza, Best Ford was sponsored by North Motors, Best Motorcycle was sponsored by Abate District 12, Best Antique was sponsored by Geigers Street Rods, Thurston's Plus sponsored Best of Show and Best Paint, Brady Optical sponsored the People's Choice Car and the People's Choice Motorcycle was sponsored by C&J Woodworks.



Local Merchants- Pulling tables out, blocking parking and doing group promotion for an event this large isn't easy. The event shifted significantly this year due to construction, and local merchants were flexible. We appreciate all the "word of mouth" help from every local merchant that made the Great American Market a success this year.



City Management. The logistics of an event like the Great American Market are difficult. There are a lot of moving parts, and the City of Emporia gave us flexibility in dealing with complex situations that allowed for a smooth market that took advantage of emerging opportunities.

The Construction Crew. The 700 Block opened up the Thursday before the Great American Market. This was after Water Main officials estimated a finish date for the 700 Block of September 15th, just one week prior to the event. Crews absolutely got after it and busted tail in making up over one week in three days. It was an amazing thing to watch, and they did it to benefit our local businesses.

Kansas BTW "Trikes"- The Kansas "Trike" festival receives financial assistance from the Convention and Visitors Bureau to visit Emporia for their annual convention. It just so happens that the date for their convention each year is the second Saturday in September (just like the Great American Market). When looking at the "Trikes" it was like looking at the intersection of engineering and art. These creative vehicles add a unique dimension to the Great American Market, and we are happy to host this group as part of the event.



Other local events- Event's like Bluestem Farm and Ranch Supply's "Conservation Days" help encourage new people to come to town that attend the Great American Market. I'm sure some Market participants visited Bluestem, and I know some of their participants visited the Great

American Market. That event, when coupled with the All Veteran's Memorial Golf Tournament meant there were no shortage of activities Saturday. Let's face it, there was no reason to be bored last Saturday...



Emporia Main Street Committees- For events this large, we have a bit of an "all hands on deck" approach. Although the Great American Market is technically a Board of Directors function, representatives from Promotion, Design, Business Enhancement and Home Based Business Committees were all present and working toward the betterment of the event.

Staff-Event's Coordinator Becky Smith dealt with a weird map this year, new vendors, street safety issues and a rain storm that forced us to re-mark every vendor space the morning of the Great American Market. This event takes a lot of time and dedication, and Becky really stepped up.

I'm sure we forgot someone, but you get the point... It takes A LOT of people to make the Great American Market a success (and a little help from mother nature doesn't hurt).



The individuals and entities listed above are all partners in the success of Emporia Main Street and our community. Emporia Main Street looks for people that are willing to put in actual work to make our community a better place to live, work and play. It's easy to talk about bringing people to town for events, developing businesses or creating a healthier business environment that is fun for the community, but it's more difficult to get up at 3:00 a.m. and make it happen. We want to thank all of those listed above, and everyone else working to sustainably improve Emporia.

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