



What's red and green and stuffed with goodies?

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Littleton's 1888 Santa Fe Depot was central to this small trading and agricultural supply town in the late 19th century and today, in a 21st century iteration, it deserves wider visibility as an ideal spot to find one-of-a kind art and craft items for gifts on one's holiday list — or for yourself.

A cheery Engineer Joe greets you at the front door, setting the tone for a shopping experience that's far, far away from the mall.

Transformed into an arts center/gallery by Littleton Fine Arts Guild members during the US Bicentennial year (1976), the Depot Arts Center welcomes "Holiday Express" each year with a loaded baggage platform, agent's office and waiting room, full of toys, ornaments knits, ceramics, jewelry and other imaginative crafts, as well as paintings and photographs on the walls. It has arrived and stays through Dec. 23 with extended hours according to Littleton Fine Arts Guild president Peggy Deitz.

Sue Mackert is this year's chairman and, with an agenda of expanding the show, she searched area craft shows and invited artists new to the Depot, including 13 year old Shannon Trawick, whose Pozy Pressings business offers dried flowers turned into whimsical little beings on stationary. Her grandmother taught her to press and dry flowers and a friend with business experience helped her turn a good idea into a real business, with Web site, business cards and ideas for T-shirts and more.

Funny long-armed critters that hug a child, stylish wee sweaters, designer stockings to "hang from the mantle with care" and sparkly jewelry are arranged among snugly fleece throws, shiny glass serving dishes and dozens of other colorful items.

The Depot Arts Center and Gallery is located at 2069 W. Powers Ave., at Court Place, just north of the courthouse and Buck Center. Hours: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays, plus extended holiday hours: 1 to 4 p.m. Sundays Dec. 7, 14, 21; 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Dec. 22 and 23. 303-795-0781, www.littleton.org/arts.

at a glance:

- What's red and green and full of goodies?
- Local artisans, aka Santa's elves