

NFL player-backed burger restaurant opening KC area location this month

BY JENNA THOMPSON
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Patrick Mahomes isn't the only quarterback opening a restaurant in the Kansas City area this year.

Smalls Sliders — a hamburger slider chain backed by former New Orleans Saints player Drew Brees — is unveiling its first spot in the metro.

The Atlanta-based brand is celebrating the grand opening of its Blue Springs location Saturday.

When the spot at 704 NW Mock Ave. begins serving customers at 10 a.m. that day, the first 100 guests will receive a pair of "smorange slides," or bright orange slide-on shoes.

"We're thrilled for guests across the Blue Springs community to finally have the chance to try our iconic cheeseburger sliders and seasoned waffle fries," said Mark Parretta, local owner of the Blue Springs location.



Smalls Sliders is opening a Blue Springs location soon.

"From the moment our Can dropped, the enthusiasm and excitement from residents throughout the region has been incredible."

The brand is known for its signature, bright orange shipping container-like restaurants with drive-thru and walk-up windows. The 750-square-foot cans are dropped onto each site.

Smalls' classic sliders are served with its signature "smauce." Combo

meals include waffle fries, a drink and up to four sliders.

It also sells shakes: vanilla, chocolate, and cookies and cream.

Founded in late 2019 by Brandon Landry, the owner of Walk-On's Sports Bistreaux, Smalls is growing rapidly.

Today, it has locations in Texas, Alabama, Louisiana, South Carolina and beyond.

The brand announced in

QSR Magazine this February that it had 350 locations under development.

"Founded with a mission to perfect the cheeseburger slider, Smalls is proving that simplicity can make a big impact," the QSR article reads.

Earlier this year, Smalls entered the Missouri market by opening one in Bridgeton, near St. Louis. Smalls opened its first Kansas location in Wichita a few days ago.

While Smalls has not announced any other specific locations, a spokesman with the brand verified that it was hoping to open more in the metro. The company signed a deal with Parretta to open nine locations in the area.

Possible spots for restaurants include: Lee's Summit, Kansas City, Olathe, Overland Park, Liberty and Independence.

The Blue Springs spot will be open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sundays through Thursdays, and 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays.

In addition to being a partner at Whataburger franchise KMO Burger, Mahomes is opening a steakhouse with tight end Travis Kelce. The players' concept, 1587 Prime, will open this year in the Loews Kansas City Hotel at 1515 Wyandotte St.

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Former Johnson County BBQ spot to become sushi, poke, ramen restaurant

BY JENNA THOMPSON
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Months after Burnt End BBQ left its Overland Park home and headed west for De Soto, a sushi, poke and ramen restaurant will move in.

Pokeloha, a restaurant with an existing Kansas City location, will open in Johnson County this summer.

The restaurant filed commercial sign permits

this month for the 11831 Metcalf Ave. space.

A manager with the restaurant confirmed that the restaurant would take over the Overland Park spot, adding that the new location will have a slightly different menu than the others, after owners hired a sushi chef from New York with 20 years of experience.

While the 8827 State Line Road spot focuses on poke — a Hawaiian dish with raw fish, savory

sauce, vegetables and more — the new spot will have an expanded menu to include sushi and ramen.

An exact menu was not available.

Pokeloha's other location is in Lawrence at 937 Massachusetts St.

Burnt End BBQ closed its Overland Park spot last year around the time it opened in De Soto at 34071 Commerce Drive.

Initially, Burnt End BBQ planned to keep both

locations, but pitmaster Stephen "Smokey" Schwartz told The Star at the time that they would have had to expand their old location to keep up with operations.

"In order for us to do what we wanted to do, we'd have to make some really huge reconstructive changes to the building," he said. "It was too much to do two at one time."

Burnt End BBQ also has a location in Crown Center.

Pokeloha first opened its original Lawrence spot in March 2019, with the State Line location following suit a few months later.

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Thousands pay respects as body of Pope Francis lies in state

BY PAUL GODFREY
UPI.com

Mourners began filing past the open coffin of the late Pope Francis inside St. Peter's Basilica on Wednesday as a three-day period of lying in state got underway in the Vatican.

More than 20,000 people packed St. Peter's Square as the body of the pontiff, who died Monday at the age of 88, was transferred in a processional rite from the chapel of Santa Marta to St. Peter's Basilica, where he will remain on public view through 7 p.m. Friday.

The procession, led by the college of Cardinals, moved through Santa Marta Square, under the Arch of the Bells, and into St. Peter's Square, with the crowds "erupting into subdued but sustained applause" as his coffin

was carried up the steps of the basilica, through the central door before being placed in front of the Altar of the Confession.

Vatican carmelengo Cardinal Kevin Farrell then led a service, the Liturgy of the Word, in which the cardinals, clergy and other church officials were able to pay their respects, before opening up to the public.

Francis' body is lying in state in a simple wooden coffin in line with his wishes to dispense with the traditional three coffins, one each of cypress, lead and oak.

After public viewing ends, Farrell, the acting head of the church and man in charge of funeral arrangements, will lead the closing of the coffin in preparation for Francis' funeral mass in St. Peter's Square on Saturday morn-



The body of Pope Francis began lying in state at St. Peter's Basilica on Wednesday in the Vatican. He died of a stroke and heart failure on Monday at the age of 88.

ing.

A minute's silence will be held across Italy as the service gets underway at 10 a.m. with tens of thousands of members of the public expected to attend along with many world leaders and dignitaries including U.S. President Donald Trump, French President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, outgoing German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

After the funeral, Francis' body will be taken to

Basilica St. Mary Major, which lies outside Vatican City in the Rome district of Esquilina, for burial, again in line with his express wish to be interred there instead of in St. Peter's Basilica.

Francis, who served for 12 years after taking over from Pope Benedict XVI in 2013, died of a stroke and heart failure on Easter Monday, a month after being discharged from the hospital where he spent five weeks being treated for double pneumonia.

Love of vintage fabrics and upcycling inspires Kansas City collaboration

BY COURTNEY LANE
Special to The Star

At a time when big-box craft stores are struggling to stay afloat and are closing their doors left and right, Kansas City-based designer and author Amy Barickman's latest collaborative project couldn't have come at a better time.

Enter the Treasured Threadz Collection, a new line of fabric panels she made in collaboration with Colonial Patterns, a pattern and supply company right here in Kansas City.

The collection is an homage to the rich history of needlework, quilting and handmade artistry, aiming to connect modern makers with timeless designs from the past.

Barickman, known for her passion for vintage textiles and ability to translate historical patterns for modern audiences, sees Treasured Threadz as a bridge between generations of crafters.

"I think it's also a bit of like nostalgic and heirloom quality," Barickman said. "I mean we don't make things, we don't make fabrics like we used to."

The partnership with Colonial Patterns was a natural fit.

"Colonial Patterns would have a booth at the (trade show), like I would, selling wholesale to the trade," Barickman said. "I had always enjoyed Bud Price, who was the gentleman who owned patterns. He passed away a few years ago, but now his sons Matt and Chris Price run the company. We'd talked about collaborating over the years."

Colonial Patterns has been a staple in the embroidery and sewing world for more than 90 years, best known for its signature Aunt Martha's iron-on transfer patterns.

After selling Indygo Junction, Barickman's line of vintage sewing patterns, to Prym Dritz, a sewing tools and accessory brand, and being let go from her position, Barickman saw an opportunity to pivot and focus on her passion for vintage textiles.

Having worked with large fabric companies, she knew she wanted a different direction, something more personal. That's when she revisited the idea

of collaborating with Colonial Patterns to bring Treasured Threadz to life.

The collection features a range of fabric panels, a fusible stabilizer and instructional materials designed to inspire creativity and preserve the artistry of handcrafted textiles.

"I was able to work with them and launched five of the different panels that are both folk patchwork and collaged vintage artwork, and then I created a stabilizer product that is a fusible batting," Barickman explained. "You could use that product and then apply it to a T-shirt, a Jean jacket, even like if you have a pillow at home and it's plain or you don't like what's on the front of it."

Barickman's archive of vintage textiles and sewing patterns has played a major role in shaping Treasured Threadz. Over the years, she has amassed an impressive array of historical embroidery transfers, fabric prints and handmade garments.

"My mom was a Home Ec teacher, and my grandma was a creative who loved to sew and did needle arts," Barickman said. "So I learned to sew when I was a child and was surrounded by my mom, who had quilts hanging on the walls in our home."

Beyond just reviving old patterns, Barickman hopes Treasured Threadz will foster a renewed appreciation for slow, intentional crafting and continue to push the trend of upcycling.

"You know, if you can go to the thrift shop and find some fabric like (chambray)," Barickman said. "You don't feel bad about ruining fabric, like not ruining it, but like if I make a mistake or I cut it wrong, I didn't spend \$50 on my fabric. I spent \$5 at the thrift."

Barickman hopes to inspire a new generation of makers with Treasured Threadz while keeping the traditions of handcrafted artistry alive.

Next up: Barickman and Colonial Patterns are working on a line of flour sack towels for hand embroidery as well as patterns to go with them that will come out later this year.

The big news? Barickman is working on a new book, so stay tuned.

BIRTHDAYS: APRIL 24

Britannica

Biographical information from April 24 is from Encyclopaedia Britannica. Explore more at [britannica.com](https://www.britannica.com).

Kelly Clarkson, American singer-songwriter (b. 1982).

Sachin Tendulkar, Indian cricketer (b. 1973).

Barbra Streisand, American actress, singer, director, producer (b. 1942).

Shirley MacLaine, American actress (b. 1934).

Richard Donner, American director (b. 1930).

Philippe Pétain, French general (b. 1856).

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