

Kodiak Walmart Replacing Fabric Section

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Diana Gish/KMXT

Some local crafters have been concerned by reports of changes to our local Walmart. KMXT's Diana Gish has the story:

When Monika McCann arrived in Kodiak she was happy to find a Walmart.

-- (McCann1 :35 "...have a fabric department.")

When McCann heard that Walmart's fabric department might close, she wondered what she would do.

-- (McCann2 :05 ...small island it's pretty big.")

She's so concerned that she's started an online petition in an effort to dissuade Walmart from making that change.

A Walmart spokeswoman in Arkansas has confirmed that the fabric department will be eliminated although she doesn't use those words. In an e-mail statement Ashley Hardie wrote, "We are converting the fabric and crafts department in the store to a newly expanded assortment of merchandise that focuses on life's celebrations. We are excited to offer our customers a new crafts and celebrations center that makes available craft and party planning needs along with information on current

trends and new ideas in the area of life's celebrations, such as holidays, weddings and birthdays."

The statement goes on to say: "The new crafts and celebrations center will continue to carry merchandise commonly referred to as 'notions' - such as sewing machines, yarn needles, thread, etc."

That "newly expanded assortment of merchandise" apparently does not include fabric.

There are other stores in Kodiak that sell fabric. Flying Geese fabric and quilts is one of those. But Flying Geese co-owner Norma Dutt doesn't expect to see an influx of Walmart fabric shoppers.

-- (Dutt :39 "...any impact on us really.")

I asked the Walmart spokeswoman if someone could explain why the fabric at Kodiak's Walmart was going to be phased out. After stating that no one in Walmart's media relations department was available for an interview Ashley Hardie wrote, "We've been converting the fabrics and crafts department in some of our stores to the new celebrations centers for a few years now. The store's remodel provides an opportunity to bring our customers this new department."

Monica McCann's on-line protest can be found on Facebook. It's called: "Petition to save Walmart Fabric Department Kodiak, Alaska."

I'm Diana Gish.

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