

## Groundbreaking held for Kingsport Carousel

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KINGSPORT -- One man's dream of creating a traditional carousel for the children of Kingsport is on the path to becoming a reality.

Kingsport officials held a groundbreaking ceremony for the carousel project Thursday morning, with more than 100 people in attendance, including many volunteers, carvers and donors to the six-year-old project.

"You all helped make Gale's dream come true," said former Alderwoman Valerie Joh, referencing her late husband -- the originator of the carousel project.



For more than five years, a group of woodcarvers and volunteers has been working to recreate a traditional carousel in downtown Kingsport, complete with 32 wooden riding animals and two chariots, 24 rounding boards depicting notable sites within the city and 24 hand-carved "sweep" animals around the top of the ride.

The project began in 2008 as a dream of the late Gale Joh, who grew up in Binghamton, N.Y. — the "Carousel Capital of the World." After Joh died in 2010, Valerie Joh and local volunteer Reggie Martin picked up the mantle and formed the nonprofit organization "Engage Kingsport" to push the project forward.