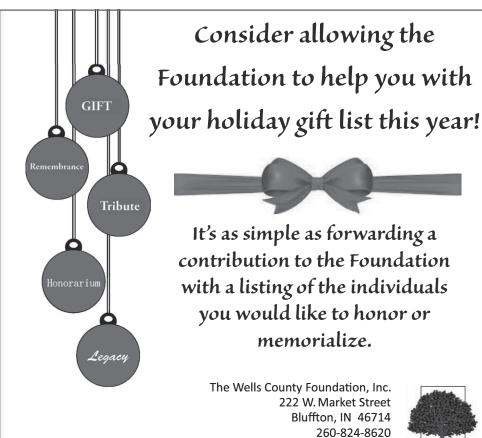
Special Supplement to The News-Banner, Wednesday, November 22, 2023 Ossian Journal, Thursday, November 23, 2023

The Newz-

Bluffton, Indiana

SHOP LOCAL EDI 2023



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Inspiring ideas for lastminute holiday shoppers

It's unlikely that anyone aspires to be a last-minute holiday shopper. Putting off holiday shopping until the last minute can make for a stressful home stretch to the season, and there's no guarantee store shelves won't already be picked clean or that gifts purchased online will arrive on time.

Despite how unappealing last-minute shopping can be, it's still a fact of life for millions of holiday shoppers. As the clock winds down this holiday season, shoppers can look to these ideas for inspiration.

• Gift cards: Gift cards may never earn a distinction as the most sentimental item to give a loved one during the holiday season, but they are surprisingly sought-after. In fact, a survey from the National Retail Federation found that 54 percent of participants identified gift cards as the most-wanted gift of the 2022 holiday season. Chain retailers, small businesses and restaurants are among the many establishments that sell gift cards, so shoppers are bound to find a card to please anyone on their shopping list.

• Food/beverage: The holiday season is a popular time to indulge in some great food and wash it down with a favorite wine or another adult beverage. That makes food and beverages a great holiday gift. Shoppers can take a loved one out to a favorite restaurant, prepare a homemade treat or purchase a favorite dish from a local specialty grocery store or eatery. Pair the food with an appropriate beverage and this accessible last-minute gift idea is sure to be a hit.

• Tickets: Tickets to a movie, sporting event, live theater performance, or concert are another gift idea that likely won't be gobbled up by early bird shoppers. People of all ages enjoy experiences, and a 2022 survey from the travel booking platform GetYour-Guide found that 50 percent of survey respondents indicated they would enjoy tickets to a concert or show.

· Books: Books make an ideal holiday gift for everyone from young kids to grandparents. Traditional print books are small enough that they can likely arrive on time even if they're purchased just a few days before Christmas. E-book sellers enable gift givers to pick the perfect time to notify loved ones they have received an electronic book. Audiobooks, which can be downloaded to a smartphone or given as a CD, make an ideal gift for loved ones who spend a lot of time behind the wheel.

Last-minute holiday shopping can be stressful. However, various soughtafter items can be secured at the last minute, ensuring gift givers' loved ones have a happy holiday season.

2023 SHOP LOCAL EDITION

How businesses can make the most of Small **Business Saturday**

Sales and consumer of women planned to holidays compete for shoppers' attentions every year between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Such events save consumers billions of dollars every year, but small business owners know it's no small feat getting holiday shoppers to part with their hardearned money.

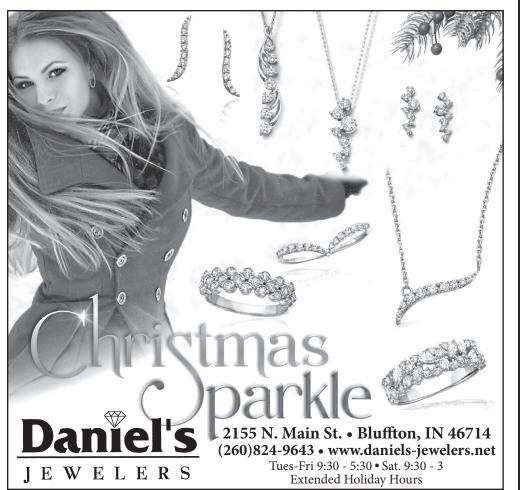
Competing for holiday shoppers is hard work, but those efforts can provide a big payoff. According to Finder's Black Friday Statistics 2022, 55 percent of men and 52 percent

shop Black Friday sales in 2022, when men planned to spend \$465 and women intended to spend \$300. If small business owners are concerned they can't compete on Black Friday, they can always look to Small Business Saturday, which encourages holiday shoppers to patronize brick and mortar businesses that are small and local. Competition can still be steep on Small Business Saturday, but the following are some strategies business owners can employ



to make the most of this unique event on the holiday season calendar.

• Update your website. The Small Business Administration recom-(Continued on Page 5)







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2 - 1 lb. Packages Beef Stew Meat

2 - Packages Hamburger Patties (4 per) - Beef Sirloin Steak

Pork Lover's Box Estimated Price* \$100.00 1 - Package Pork Casing Sausage - 1 lb. Packages Bulk Sausage 2 - Packages Regular Brats (4 per) 2 - Packages Pork Chops (4 per) 2 - Packages Pork Steaks (2 per) 1 - Pork Roast

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BUY BULK & SAVE 10% Meat Lover's Box Estimated Price* \$150.00 Estimated Price* \$170.00 2 - Packages Pork Chops (4 per) 10 - 1 lb. Packages Ground Chuck 2 - Pork Roast 1 - Package Pork Spare Ribs 2 - Beef Chuck Roast

- Packages Pork Casing Sausage 2 - Packages Beef Minute Steaks (4 per) 5 - 1 lb. Packages Bulk Sausage 2 - Beef Chuck Roast 5 - 1 lb. Packages Ground Beef 2 - New York Strip Steaks 2 - Packages Pork Steaks (2 per) 2 - Packages Pork Steaks (2 per) 1 - Package Pork Spare Ribs 2 - Beef T-Bone Steaks 1 - Package of Chicken Breast (2 per) 1 - Reef Sirloin Steak 2 - 1 lb. Packages of Pork Bacon 1 - Package of Chicken Breast (2 per)

> The Estimated Price's listed above are subject to change without notice. Updated 10/12/2023 (24 Hour Notice for Box Orders Please)

Deluxe Meat Lover's Box Grill Lover's Box Estimated Price* \$140.00 2 - Packages Pork Chops (4 per)

2 - Packages Pork Steaks (2 per) Packages Regular Brats (4 per) 1 - Package Beef Minute Steaks (4 per) 2 - Packages Specialty Brats (4 per) 4 - 1 lb. Packages Ground Beef 4 - Packages Hamburger Patties (4 per) 2 - New York Strip Steaks 2 - Beef T-Bone Steaks 2 - Packages of Chicken Breast (2 per)

SIDES OF BEEF AVAILABLE **AT MARKET PRICES** WHOLE -Or- HALF HOG dressed \$ 2.99/lb.

2023 SHOP LOCAL EDITION How communities benefit when consumers shop local

Ideas about shopping are never set in stone, and the pandemic illustrated just how quickly consumer trends and opinions can change. Many individuals are now reevaluating how they spend their hard-earned money, particularly since inflation has affected just how far a dollar can be stretched. When consumers think about which stores to patronize, locally owned businesses may be the smartest option for a number of reasons - not the least of which is the way such enterprises benefit the communities they call home.

More money kept in the community

Shopping locally means that more money will stay in the community. According to recent research from Civic Economics, local eateries return nearly 79 percent of revenue to the community, compared to just over 30 percent for chain restaurants. Overall, for every \$100 spent at a local business, around \$73 remains in the community, verus roughly \$43 when shopping at a non-locally owned business.

Get a personal touch

Local business owners typically are inclined to go the extra mile for their customers and are personally invested in the services and products they are selling. As a result, shopping locally tends to be a personalized experience. Furthermore, a local business owner may be more amenable to ordering products for specific clientele. Such personalized service is typically not accessible when shopping big box stores or other shops where owners are off-site.

Lines are short

Waiting in long lines for checkout or to pick up merchandise ordered online can drain consumers' energy and contribute to stress. Local businesses tend to have short lines and small crowds, which can lead to a more pleasant shopping experience.

Generates tax revenue

Local businesses generate more tax



revenue per sales dollar, according to Rubicon, a digital marketplace for waste and recycling businesses. Taxes paid by local small businesses go to support schools, parks, roads, and other programs that benefit the community as well.

Support nonprofits

Local businesses often support good work in the community, such as nonprofit groups. These can include schools and sports teams, among other groups. According to Dr. Sue Lynn Sasser, professor of economics at the University of Central Oklahoma, studies indicate nonprofits "receive 250 percent more support from small businesses than larger ones."

Support other local businesses

Local business support other local businesses by buying and selling among each other. A local, independently owned restaurant may source its ingredients from local farms, which means visitors to such eateries are supporting multiple local businesses each time they dine out.

Small businesses are a boon to the economy, particularly local economies. These enterprises help their communities in a multitude of ways.

2023 SHOP LOCAL EDITION

How businesses

(Continued from Page 3)

mends that small business owners consider a digital makeover for their websites. Even though Small Business Saturday encourages individuals to shop in person, modern consumers typically peruse online offerings first. Updating an outdated website or simply reviewing all information, including product details, on the website to ensure it's up-to-date can help small businesses make a strong first impression with holiday shoppers.

• Promote Small Business Saturday. Though it's been around for more than a decade, Small Business Saturday is not yet the household name that Black Friday has become. Small business owners can drum up interest in Small Business Saturday by promoting the day on their social media channels. The SBA recommends business owners encourage shoppers to snap selfies and tag their businesses on their own social medial accounts, which can increase engagement and potentially attract new customers.

• Sell and promote gift cards. Gift

cards help national retailers generate substantial revenue each year, and there's no reason why small businesses can't get their piece of the gift card pie. Gift cards remain wildly popular, as a recent survey from the National Retail Federation found that 54 percent of participants identified gift cards as the most-wanted gift of the 2022 holiday season. Small businesses can offer discounted gift cards on Small Business Saturday and promote those efforts on their websites and via social media.

• Open early and close late. Small Business Saturday, which occurs on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, is a great opportunity for small businesses to start the potentially lucrative holiday season off on the right foot. The SBA urges small businesses to open early and close late on Small Business Saturday so they can capitalize as much as possible on this popular retail holiday.

Small business owners can embrace various strategies to make the most of Small Business Saturday.

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2023 SHOP LOCAL EDITION



"The early bird gets the worm" is a well-known English proverb that historians trace all the way back to the 1600s. Though the words might first have been popularized hundreds of years ago, they remain as true today as they were then, particularly in regard to holiday shopping.

Savvy shoppers have long touted the importance of starting early when looking for holiday gifts for loved ones. Seasoned procrastinators may never embrace early shopping, but others who want to a less hectic holiday shopping season can consider these tips.

• Begin with a plan. Holiday shopping excursions, whether they take place in town, at the mall or online, can take longer than expected when shoppers have no idea what they're looking for. Prior to your first holiday shopping trip, jot down gift ideas for each person on your list. Then scour stores or websites for those items. Starting early affords shoppers time to bargain hunt and ensures supply shortages or other issues won't get in the way of a happy loved one come the holiday season.

• Recognize the notion of "early" has changed. Early holiday shopping used to be synonymous with the retail holiday Black Friday, which occurs the day after Thanksgiving in the United States. However, many holiday shoppers now begin buying gifts long before they've purchased a Thanksgiving turkey. In its 2022 Consumer Pulse Survey, McKinsey & Company found that 56 percent of consumers started their holiday shopping in October. A

host of variables may have influenced that shift, but supply chain issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic have lingered, which undoubtedly compelled consumers to get an especially early start on holiday shopping. Shoppers who want to ensure everything arrives on time for the holiday season must recognize that "early" shopping now involves beginning around Halloween, if not earlier.

• Take the (local) road less traveled. Shopping local merchants in person is a strategy savvy shoppers have long since embraced, but it's one that's especially beneficial in an era marked by supply chain issues and inflation. Local merchants don't have the overhead or sizable staffs of big box or chain stores, which enables them to keep costs low. And since local merchants produce many of their own products, it's likely there's something in store that shoppers will love and less likely that they will have issues filling orders. A late fall afternoon in a local shopping district can yield an array of treasures and help holiday shoppers find the right gift for many a person on their list.

• When in doubt, go gift card. If the right gift is proving elusive even when shopping early, shoppers should not hesitate to go the gift card route. Shoppers need not feel as though a gift card is a nonstarter, as a 2022 survey from the National Retail Federation found that 54 percent of survey respondents indicated gift cards were the most desirable gift of the holiday season.

Shopping early is a great way to enjoy a less hectic holiday season.

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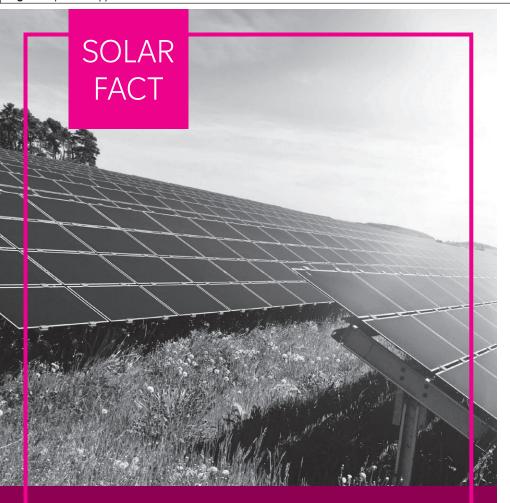
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