

*Celebrate the spirit
of small business --
your guide to shopping,
dining, and supporting
local this summer.*



Surprising features of shopping local

A movement to “shop local” gained steam as more communities faced few options outside of big box stores. The shop local approach encourages consumers to patronize local businesses, and even those fully devoted to the cause might not realize how beneficial it can be. The following is a look at how communities and residents win when shopping local.

- **Shopping local increases employment opportunities.** Small businesses employ more workers in the United States than their larger counterparts, creating two out of every three new jobs, according to the Small Business Administration. In fact, small businesses account for 99.7 percent of all employer firms in the United States. Buying locally means employment levels are either going to be stable or

there will be more opportunities for local residents to work in the community.

- **Shopping local does not cost more money.** Many people are under the assumption that buying locally is always more expensive. But this isn’t always the case. Local shops may offer a range of products from a particular region, which will reduce shipping costs, and that savings can be passed on to the consumer. Plus, small businesses may offer special discounts and promotions more readily than nationwide chains, so consumers can get more value for their money.
- **Shopping local helps to keep money in the community.** Patronizing local stores creates a recirculation of money in the community. Dollars spent in town raise the overall level of economic activity,

which helps pay salaries, and builds up the local tax base, says Michigan State University Center for Community and Economic Development.

- **Shopping local can help the planet.** Environmentalists were among the first people to promote local consumption, as buying local can cut down on transportation-related pollution.
- **Shopping local stretches beyond seasonal events.** Certainly there are a host of local merchants that do much of their business during key times of the year or specialize in seasonal produce. However, many local businesses also offer products year-round, and



these local merchants include artisans, designers, musicians, and clothing retailers.

There are many reasons to increase reliance on local shops and vendors, who benefit communities and residents in myriad ways.

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Fun ways to showcase local businesses

Small businesses are the backbone of local communities. Various statistics illustrate how money spent at local businesses stays in the communities where they are located. According to the American Independent Business Alliance, the local multiplier effect means money spent within a local community circulates through the local economy two to four times more than money spent at a non-local company. These dollars benefit communities in myriad ways, including job creation.

People have plenty of reasons



to patronize local businesses, including more tailored customer service and niche products that may not be available elsewhere. There are fun ways residents can get behind local businesses, and entertaining ways businesses can interact with their communities. Explore these ideas.

Sports sponsorship

Customers who are regulars can ask their favorite shopkeepers or service providers in town to sponsor a local sports team. The name of the sponsor will be emblazoned

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through whenever it suits ya! Our Unlimited Wash Club is a local favorite, offering members unlimited washes for one low monthly price. Whether your car's covered in salt, dust, or just the day-to-day mess, the club keeps you lookin' fresh without the fuss. Members also get exclusive access to free vacuums, so you can tidy up inside too — all in one go. And of course, we do it all with a little Aussie attitude — laid-back, reliable, and always friendly. From our Outback-inspired branding to fun seasonal deals, we like to keep things simple, clean, and just a bit different than the rest. Whether you're a loyal local or just passing through, Outback Auto Wash is here to make your ride shine — any time, day or night. **Swing through the Outback — and drive out lookin' sharp.**



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FUN WAYS >> FROM PAGE 1
on the backs of uniform shirts or on signage at fields or stadiums, and the team can enlist the sponsor to do more. He or she can participate in things like throwing out the first pitch or a halftime slam dunk contest or special interaction with a team mascot. **Giveaways** Many organizations, including schools, utilize tricky tray gift auctions to raise money. Such events require donated merchandise and service vouchers. Community residents can ask businesses to sponsor these functions by donating items. Businesses get their name and products out to those who many be unfamiliar, and they are associating their products or services with an enjoyable event where people are having a good time. **School or club chats** Local business owners can be invited to speak to students or youth groups about their experiences. This will give children

and young adults information about how local enterprises work and the products they produce. **Parades and festivals** Local businesses may want to participate in various events that take place in the community. For example, a food merchant or restaurant may want to set up a booth at a fair or festival to introduce new customers to their foods. Business owners and their employees can march in parades through Main Street during holiday celebrations. Residents may have fun trying to hit the target and fell a prominent local business owner in a dunk tank. Someone who owns a trucking company can have big rigs on display so that children can take a picture in front of or inside of them. There are plenty of entertaining ways to connect local businesses with their communities. Residents get to see a fun side of the businesses, and the owners enjoy unique ways to get their brand or message out to the masses.



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Some hidden benefits to shopping local

The economic impact of shopping within one's community is significant. Though estimates vary and are always open to fluctuation, a recent survey from American Express and the National Federation of Independent Business indicated roughly 67 cents out of every dollar spent at a small business remains in the community.

The economic impact of shopping local is plain to see, as many local business owners and employees live in the communities where their companies operate. But there are additional and perhaps less obvious benefits to buying close to home as well.

- **Walkability:** Community residents who aspire to keep their dollars within their own towns may not need to drive to do so. For example, residents may live within walking distance of local restaurants. A casual stroll to dinner out on the town can make for a more relaxing evening. But that's not the only way walkability pays dividends. A 2023 survey from the National Association of Realtors® found that 78 percent of potential home buyers indicate they'd pay more for a home in a walkable community than one that required driving to access amenities like shops and restaurants. By shopping local and supporting businesses within walking distance of their homes, homeowners can help to maintain their local economies and even drive up the value of local real estate.
- **Time:** Another notable but easily overlooked benefit to shopping local is the time savings. Businesses located within one's community are likely a short walk or drive away from home, whereas getting to large chains may require significant travel. Residents can use the time they save by shopping local however they see fit, and that's a particularly notable benefit in a modern world where balancing personal and professional responsibilities is as difficult as ever.
- **Health:** Shopping local also can have a positive impact on consumers' overall health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports there are many notable benefits to social connection, including increased feelings of belonging and being loved and even greater resistance to serious illness and disease. When shopping at locally owned small businesses, residents typically interact with owners and staff in ways that are far less common than when shopping at chain stores. Those interactions help foster relationships between business owners, employees and customers, and that can benefit shoppers in many of the ways noted by the CDC.

Patronizing locally owned small businesses has a well-documented positive impact on local economies. A closer look at shopping local reveals there are many lesser known but no less significant advantages to supporting small businesses in one's community.



Local family's mission to make life more affordable for other families



Great Stuff Warehouse is a family-owned business in the heart of the Great Lakes Mall whose mission is to help save

folks money on everyday items. Originally started out of a local garage, the business grew and moved to the mall and now carries a "little bit of everything" all at 25-50% off big retail prices every day – no coupons or gimmicks needed to save here.

The clothing section has been growing dramatically and now includes over 17 racks of brand new, name brand clothing from a variety of major retailers. There are items for kids, women and men and everything is 50-75% or more off retail prices.

The front of the store is always loaded with seasonal goodies, too!

Very soon the store will be stocked with a variety of Halloween and Christmas décor and other must haves.

Great Stuff Warehouse can help you save on everything else, too!

Whether you simply need to stock up on personal care items like shampoo, soap, lotions, cosmetics or other drug store items or you need new household goods, cleaning & paper products, or even a deal on bedding – we have you covered.

Great Stuff Warehouse has all the fun stuff, too. Amazon Mystery boxes have been added in addition to toys, games, dvds & books and so much more!

Come check out the fully stocked shelves & the bountiful bin tables in the store in the Great Lakes Mall, near the food court, directly across from JC Penny's.

Also, be sure to follow Great Stuff Warehouse on Facebook or Instagram to see all the newest inventory and promotions!



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Small business owners have confronted many ups and downs in recent years. Though confronting challenges has always been part of owning a small business, inflation has made turning a profit a particularly tall task over the first half of the 2020s.

The online financial resource Investopedia notes that the rate of inflation has long been viewed as a metric through which to gauge the overall health of a country's economy. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates the inflation rate

What local businesses can do to attract customers

reached 7 percent at the end of 2021, when the nation was still in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic. That 7 percent figure was the highest inflation rate since the end of 1981, when the rate was 8.9 percent. Though the inflation rate dropped considerably by the end of 2023 (3.4 percent) and even further upon the conclusion of 2024 (2.9 percent), consumer prices remain high, which has made it difficult for some small businesses to attract customers. In the current economic climate, local businesses may need to get creative to attract customers, and the following are some strategies to consider.

- **Participate in community events.** Community events present wonderful opportunities for small businesses to engage with local residents as they promote their products and offerings. Holiday bazaars and festivals, town days that celebrate a town's culture, including its local businesses, and even school functions provide opportunities for resi-

dents to get to know local business owners and vice versa. Establishing a presence at such events can be an invaluable way for local businesses to connect with residents and attract new customers.

- **Host fun events at your business.** Of course, local business owners need not rely exclusively on community events run by local chambers of commerce to attract new customers. Hosting events like trivia nights or first responder nights that offer discounts to local emergency response personnel is a great way to attract customers. Hosting such events on weeknights early in the week can be especially beneficial, as Monday and Tuesday nights tend to be slow. Bars and restaurants can even designate one night per week as a unique menu night when they serve foods and beverages that are not part of their typical offerings. Owners can take this idea one step further by encouraging locals to submit suggestions for foods, drinks and even themes for unique nights via social media.

- **Sponsor an open mic night.** Open mic night is another way to attract new customers, and such events can be held at restaurants, bars, breweries, wineries, and even bookstores. The exact origins of open mic nights are uncertain, but many trace them to the folk music scene that arose in the early 1960s. Open mic nights have endured since those early days, which is a testament to their popularity. Bars and restaurants can host open mic nights for musicians, while bookstores can encourage local writers to read from their latest works. Such nights will attract artists and their friends who want to show support, but also people interested in fostering a strong local culture scene, ultimately providing a great way for business owners to entice more people into their establishments.

An up and down economy can make it hard for local businesses to attract new customers. But there are various ways for small business owners to engage with local residents and attract new customers along the way.

Flowers on the Vine Expands with New Location in Willoughby

Get ready, flower lovers—Flowers on the Vine is blooming with a fresh location in Willoughby, Ohio. Owned by Founder Joanna Nachtigal-Zona, the new location offers a dynamic outdoor marketing model to the community, featuring a complete seasonal selection of Christmas trees and pumpkins, plus stunning floral arrangements year round. Meanwhile, the original Cleveland location is set to transition into a franchise, marking a significant milestone in the company's expansion. Be on the lookout for our Chesterland location at the beginning of August and a West Side location coming in the fall!

For those seeking a stable investment opportunity, Flowers on the Vine stands solid in the ever-thriving \$12 billion floral industry, according to Zona. The industry is further projected to hit \$25

billion by the end of 2025 as stated on Artizon, a market research company.

"The reason to invest in Flowers on the Vine is twofold," says Nachtigal-Zona. "I bring the experience of a veteran floral franchisee, combined with my background as an educator. I know how to teach, and I know how to build successful businesses. Flowers have always been a staple in the gift industry, yet the market remains wildly underserved. Just last year, FTD (Florists' Transworld Delivery) reported over 20,000 unfulfilled orders—there's demand, and we have the expertise to meet it."

Flowers on the Vine is committed



to a strategic and data-driven approach to expansion. By leveraging insights from leading floral aggregators like FTD, the brand is pinpointing high-demand markets and actively securing franchise locations where they are needed most.

Nachtigal-Zona and her team have also partnered with a nationwide real estate expert to help franchisees secure prime locations, working to create a seamless investment.

"It really is a complete package," Nachtigal-Zona adds. "With our dual-purpose retail model—serving both local customers and fulfilling online orders—we ensure multiple revenue streams. Flowers on the Vine is ranked among the TOP 250 florists in the FTD network, so franchise owners are stepping into a proven, highly scalable business."

Entrepreneurs interested in bringing Flowers on the Vine to

their community will benefit from full franchise support, including marketing, branded elements, a streamlined operational model, exclusive access to national aggregators, and comprehensive training.

Flowers on the Vine is now welcoming inquiries from entrepreneurs eager to join a brand that blends artistry with strong business potential. For more information on franchise opportunities, visit <https://flowersonthevinefranchise.com/> or contact the Flowers on the Vine franchise team today.

About Flowers on the Vine

Flowers on the Vine is a premier floral brand known for its exceptional quality, artistic arrangements, and seamless integration of online and local sales. Ranked among the TOP 250 florists in the FTD network, the company offers a scalable franchise model designed to empower entrepreneurs with comprehensive support, marketing expertise, and a turnkey operational system. To learn more, visit <https://flowersonthevinefranchise.com>.



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By Gabriel Mcvey
PAINESVILLE TOWNSHIP

If you're trying to add a little something to your home or yard, whether that's a gas fireplace in the den or a full patio in the backyard, American Home & Energy Products is your destination for indoor and outdoor living products and solutions.

The shop, located at 1270 Mentor Ave. in Painesville Township, across from the Lake County Fairgrounds, is conveniently located and has everything you could want for your home.

Are you ready for summer?

Even though American Home & Energy Products is well-known in the area for their fireplace shop, they have an extensive outdoor living section as well to compliment it.

When it comes to outdoor living, Chris Bedrick, the shop's owner, will tell you, "It all starts with the patio."

Behind the shop is a full brick and stone yard with displays in all styles, colors, looks and textures to accommodate the newest trends. Whether it's clean and modern or rough and rustic, American Home has what you need.

"We've got various types of decorative concrete pavers: rustic, modern, large, small," Bedrick said. "With the pavers it just looks so much nicer than plain concrete. If you're looking to elevate the look, the view or the style of your patio, it gives you a rich, unique look."

There's also a collection of sitting walls and columns to choose from to add an accent to your patio and make

it your own.

While you're in back, looking over stone, stop and take a look at the variety of outdoor furniture from Berlin Gardens – they're high-quality pieces in all sorts and styles, from gliders and loungers, to dining sets, to Adirondack chairs and more.

Cast a little shade on your patio with coverings, pavilions and pergolas to beat the summer heat, there are many to choose from at American Home.

If you're looking to cook next to your patio, American Home carries a full line of gas grills and smokers as well as outdoor kitchens that can be custom-built. If you want to stay warm by the patio, there are lots of outdoor firepits and fireplaces in gas and wood to choose from as well.

"We can go simple, or we can go extensive," Bedrick said.

If you want to added a water feature for a soothing effect, American Home can add a pond or fountain, pondless waterfall or a stream. They also offer aquatic plants and fish to really give it a soothing, tropical look.

Whether you're starting from scratch or adding to an existing patio, American Home & Energy Products is ready to make your vision a reality.

Inside the shop is a wide variety of wood and gas fireplaces and stoves, as well as custom stonework samples in any color, look, style or texture you could want.

All the products and services on offer at American Home are hand-chosen by the owner, Chris Bedrick, over two decades of work.

The shop works to meet homeowners at whatever level of help they require, whether you're a do-it-yourselfer, have a contractor you'd like to bring in on the project or if you want to take advantage of the design and installation service American Home has to offer.

Come down and talk with the sales staff, who can offer you an education on the products and how they can help you.

American Home & Energy Products is located at 1270 Mentor Ave. in Painesville Township. For more information, please call 440-358-5858 or visit american-home.com.

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Did You Know?

Shopping locally not only means getting to see the same friendly faces each time you patronize a nearby business, it also means keeping money in your community. A 2018 study from American Express, the company that founded Small Business Saturday (which is celebrated the day after Black Friday), and the National Federation of Independent Business found that roughly two-thirds of every dollar spent at a small business ultimately stays in the local community. That boils down to 67 cents out of every dollar. The American Independent Business Alliance also references the “local multiplier” regarding local spending. This occurs when people spend at a locally owned and independent business instead of chain stores or mega online retailers. Although the exact amount of dollars recirculated by locally owned businesses varies due to certain unique criteria, retail studies conducted by Civic Economics has found a person’s dollars at these locally owned businesses recirculate through the local economy two to four times more than money spent at non-local companies. This money helps generate more local wealth, charitable contributions and jobs.





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HOT DAYS COOL FLOORS

SPECIAL FINANCING AVAILABLE*

*Subject to credit approval. Ask store associate for details.

July 1 - September 2



Stop in and see us at **171 Chestnut Street in Painesville!**
440-392-2000
Visit our website at www.locationcarpet.com
Check us out on **Facebook** or **Instagram!**

The Green Shepherdess LLC



The Green Shepherdess LCC is a Fair Trade Boutique stocked with handmade items from around the world including (but not limited to) Uganda, Kenya, the West Bank, India, Philippines, Mexico, Guatemala, Haiti, and the U.S.A. Shopping fair trade ensures that the artisans and farmers receive a just wage, are guaranteed safe working conditions, environmentally sustainable practices are employed, and it empowers women through education and market opportunities. The Green Shepherdess carries packaged foods including tea, coffee, chocolate, honey, olive oil, dates, nuts, as well as unique housewares items and baskets, jewelry, clothing, shopping bags, eco-friendly cleaning items, bath and body products, and much more!

August 2nd is the DTW NashWill Music Event! To celebrate, we are offering a 20% discount on all Thistle Farms products including lotions, bodywash, lip balms, essential oil roller balls, room sprays, and books. The discount is available for use in-store and online www.thegreenshepherdess.com (discount code NASHWILL).

Thistles Farms is a social enterprise in Nashville, TN that offers women survivors of sex trafficking and prostitution in the Nashville area with free housing, healthcare, counseling, and job readiness. Thistle Farms also challenges the systems that commoditize, criminalize, and exploit women. Shopping Thistle Farms at The Green Shepherdess not only supports a local DTW small business, but it supports important work being done in downtown Nashville, TN! To view the Thistle Farms products in-stock, visit our website today!



Source: American Express Small Business Saturday Consumer Insights Survey

#ShopLocal



The Green Shepherdess Fair-Trade Boutique

36 Public Square,
Downtown Willoughby

online store: www.thegreenshepherdess.com

Store hours;
Wednesday-Friday 12pm-5pm | Saturday 9am-3pm

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NEED CASH?

GET INSTANT CASH FOR THE FOLLOWING:



Unwanted or Broken
GOLD JEWELRY



Gold & Silver Coins
Dimes, Quarters & Halves 1964 & Before



- Gold Coins
- Platinum
- Estate Jewelry
- Wedding Rings
- Gold & Platinum Jewelry
- David Yurman
- Tiffany & Co. Jewelry
- Diamonds
- Coin Collections
- Proof & Mint Sets
- All U.S. & Foreign Coins

25% off
Fine Jewelry Repair

Limit one per person. Expires 8/8/25

Free Ring Cleaning
and Inspection

Expires 8/8/25

SILVER \$39.44 **+0.17%** PLATINUM \$1,436.65 **-1.02%** PALLADIUM \$1,294.58 **-0.31%** GOLD \$3,409.38 **-0.67%**

WE ARE ALSO BUYING:

- Vintage or Estate Jewelry
- Jefferson Nickels 1942 - 1945
- Sterling Silver Jewelry & Flatware
- Buffalo Nickels
- Kennedy Halves 1965 - 1969
- Old Paper Money
- Gold Class Rings
- Dental Gold
- Morgan and Peace Dollars 1935 and Before

Wanted:

Gold Rounds and Bars, Silver Rounds and Bars, Platinum Rounds and Bars, Palladium Rounds and Bars Rhodium Rounds and Bars, Taking All Sizes, and, Quantities of the Above



8920 Mentor Ave., Mentor
440-266-8900

Between Malley's & Manhattan Deli

Hours: Mon, Tues, Weds,
Thurs, Fri 10 - 6
Sat 10 - 4 • Sun Closed