

Locally Owned Businesses



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Iberia home to Smitty's, Earthworm

By Alberta Stojkovic
AIM Media Midwest

When customers step into Smitty's Carryout store in Iberia, Manager Deb Teneyck is sure to know their name. If you're a new customer, she is sure to strike up a conversation and learn your name.

Teneyck has worked at Smitty's, 3594 State Route 309, since 2019 when it reopened under the ownership of Louis and Karen Cortez. She said customers often stop on their way to work and construction workers stop for a soft drink or water. She often comes in before the store opens at 6 a.m. to get there for people on their way to work, and she worked throughout the pandemic.

Besides selling gasoline, the store stocks the things people most use and request. The carryout sells milk and other dairy products, cereal, and a few staple items along with beer, wine and tobacco. A recent favorite is Hunt Brothers Pizza made in the store and sold by the slice or the pie. Energy drinks are popular as well as water by the bottle or gallon. They also have an ATM for cash, sell lottery tickets, and have a large variety of candy and snacks.

"The store is kind of a lifeline to a lot of people here in Iberia," said Teneyck. "I love coming in to work every day. It makes me happy whenever I can



Alberta Stojkovic | AIM Media Midwest

Deb Teneyck is behind the counter at Smitty's Carryout in Iberia, greeting customers Alexis and Betsy Gallagher.

help someone. It's the best job I've ever had."

Customer Chris Sullivan greeted Teneyck and teased her before getting a soda and saying, "It's nice to have a place to stop in on my way to work."

Teneyck appreciates the store's owners. She said she often hears from customers that they do many things to support the community. Louis Cortez was on the Northmor Local Schools Board of Education for several years and a customer said she recently saw him at a benefit for juvenile diabetes.

Louis Cortez said it was Karen who encouraged him to buy Smitty's in 2018 from owners Tom and Mike

Smith. It took some time to do some remodeling and get state licenses before it opened in 2019. He said the addition of Hunt Brothers Pizza and the "Beer Cave" helped make it successful along with

the employees' friendliness and convenient location on SR 309 between Marion and Galion.

Louis Cortez is a graduate of River Valley High

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Goat Local offers eclectic gifts

By Glenn Battishill

gbattishill@aimmediamidwest.com

For more than a year and a half, Rob and Lee Ann Purtell's downtown Delaware shop, Goat Local, has been a showcase for local artisan goods and eclectic gifts.

The Purtells have lived in Delaware for more than seven years and worked in the medical equipment business, which they said was not customer-facing and left them dreaming about opening up a retail store after the pandemic.

"When we first moved into the space, we didn't have a retail business and we saw how beautiful the front windows were and how we had this nice space in the front and thought, 'Once we get through COVID, we'd like to do something with the front of the building,'" Rob Purtell said. "We've always wanted to do a retail store."

The result is Goat Local, a gift shop located at 57 N. Sandusky St. in downtown Delaware.



Glenn Battishill | The Gazette

A mural of the eponymous goat on the wall of Goat Local.

As far as the name of the store, Lee Ann Purtell said it came from their love of nature.

"We're big animal lovers and felt like we wanted some sort of thing that represented central Ohio wildlife and farm animals, and we wanted the name 'local' to represent out local artisan makers," she said. "We just kind of landed on goat. We thought it was fun, and we could create a character."

Rob Purtell said the focus on local artisans came from an unlikely place; the pan-

demic and the hobbies people picked up to keep busy.

"Part of it was pandemic related when all these people were discovering or rediscovering their inner creativity," he said. "As that evolved, we thought that'd be a great thing to have in our store. It allows them to have space in here and allows us to have an eclectic vibe. We did research in Short North, Grandview, Granville, Marysville, just to scout around and see what other regions had going on in terms of gift shops. We wanted a place to support local makers."

Lee Ann Purtell described the store as an "eclectic nature inspired gift shop" and said many products in the store are created by local makers.

"We have everything from small homesteads that grow their own flowers and they've got a little goat farm where they make goat milk soaps to artists and creative people," she said. "Right now, we have probably between 25 and 30 makers in the store from central Ohio."

Lee Ann Purtell said the emphasis on local items means the inventory is constantly changing.

"It's really exciting for us to see what they will bring in and add to the style and vibe of our store," she said. "Our regular customers always have new and exciting things to see when they come in."

Rob Purtell said the year and a half of Goat Local has been "a whirlwind," and the downtown has grown "exponentially."

"It's a tight knit community down here," he said. "We all kind of know each other. We meet and connect and communicate. We find that a lot of Delawareans support local, which we learned during the holiday season last year. It's nice. You don't realize it until you own a business and you see that, I think people make a point of it. We have the nicest customers and have great interactions with people."

The Purtells said they still partially do their medical equipment business but are now primarily focused on Goat Local. Lee Ann Purtell said she's enjoyed working in a customer-facing business.

"It's been great," she said. "We enjoy interacting with people and customers and exercising a new part of our brain. It's just new and fresh."

More information about Goat Local can be found at its website at www.goatlocalohio.com and on its social media pages under GoatLocalOhio.

Glenn Battishill can be reached at 740-413-0903.

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Photos by Glenn Battishill | The Gazette

The name Goat Local came from the Purtell's love of animals and desire for a mascot character. Several items in the store are branded with their mascot.



Rob and Lee Ann Purtell stand in Goat Local, their nature-inspired gift shop that opened last year. Goat Local is located at 57 N. Sandusky St. in downtown Delaware and features eclectic products and items created by more than 20 local artisans.



A view of the front of Goat Local in downtown Delaware.



Merchandise sits on a table at Goat Local, which Lee Ann Purtell described as "a nature-inspired eclectic gift shop."

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Lettuce Work not a typical nursery

By Gary Budzak
gbudzak@aimmediamidwest.com

NEW ALBANY — If you're looking for some nice flowers and want to do a good deed at the same time, visit Lettuce Work Nursery near the Delaware County line?

"Lettuce Work is a non-profit social enterprise created to provide training and employment opportunities for adults with autism so they can live more independently as adults," said the nursery's Facebook page.

"Lettuce Work is a 501c3 non-profit social enterprise dedicated to helping young adults with autism make a successful transition from high school into the workplace," added its website. "We accomplish our mission by immersing our associates with autism into an actual workplace where we operate our on-site retail nursery and greenhouses. We focus on building their abilities to work more independently, improve their workplace communication and social skills, and gain an understanding of appropriate workplace behavior. One hundred percent of the proceeds from the sales of our products go toward supporting the services we provide. Your donations help fund our services and are greatly appreciated."

The nursery is at 14985 Fancher Road (nearly at the eastern end of that long

road), with a New Albany mailing address.

On a recent trip to the nursery, the workers were helpful and rightly proud of their dazzling inventory. Everything was tidy and well-labeled.

The nursery was founded by Doug and Julie Sharp, both Otterbein University-educated. As a nonprofit, they have a board of directors and a distinguished list of sponsors at varying donor levels. The Lettuce Work website explains the importance of its work.

"Thirty-five percent of young adults (ages 19-23) with autism have never had a job or received postgraduate education after leaving high school. Unemployment rates for adults with autism are consistently 70-80%. Prevalence of autism in U.S. children increased has almost tripled from the years 2000 (1 in 150) to 2020 (1 in 54). The U.S. (societal) cost of autism over their lifespan is about \$2.4 million."

Lettuce Work is open 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday-Wednesday and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday-Saturday. In addition to funding support, volunteers are needed. For more information, call 740-913-0495, email lettucework@gmail.com, visit Lettuce Work Nursery (Facebook) or check out lettucework.org (website).

Assistant Editor Gary Budzak photographs and reports on stories in eastern Delaware County and surrounding areas. He can be reached at 740-413-0906.



Photos by Gary Budzak | The Gazette

Lettuce Work is located on Fancher Road.





Photos by Gary Budzak | The Gazette



Bringing family, flavor and community together

By Hannah Bryan

AIM Media Midwest

CRESTLINE — What started as a joke between Crystal and Tommy Payton has turned into a dream they now work tirelessly to achieve – creating a bakery that builds community and leaves a lasting legacy.

“I’ve always liked baking. I can cook almost anything, but I like baking more than cooking,” Crystal Payton said. The Tattered Apron Bakery at 103 Cross St. in Crestline was initially her dream, but her husband, Tommy, quickly started working with her to bring it to reality.

The pair had an at-home bakery for around six months before Crystal Payton saw that a community bakery had gone up for sale. She asked her husband, who thought she was joking, if he thought they should buy the bakery. Although that particular bakery wasn’t the right fit, it sparked their search for a place to call their own.

Though the Paytons currently live in Mansfield, they are both originally from Galion and still maintain many friendships and connections in the area. As they searched for a potential bakery location, they noticed that Crestline had no bakery at all. The Paytons decided to fill that need in the community.

Located in the former Checkers Pizza location, The Tattered Apron Bakery has been open since July 10. Since moving into the building, the Paytons have



Hannah Bryan | AIM Media Midwest

Crystal and Tommy Payton are pictured inside The Tattered Apron Bakery in Crestline.

tried to cultivate a particular atmosphere.

“We want the feeling of coming in and you’re going to be in grandma’s kitchen,” Tommy Payton said. Both want The Tattered Apron to feel homey and welcoming – like visiting a familiar location.

Everything from the decorations to the bakery’s recipes have thought and care put into them. There are two framed aprons hanging on the bakery wall. One is Crystal’s mother’s apron, and the other is former Checkers owner Bill Christman’s apron.

“The Tattered Apron really, to us, means the history of baking,” Tommy Payton

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Family

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said. The Paytons don't just include their own family histories in the bakery – several of their recipes, including a 100-year-old cheesecake recipe, are family recipes given to them by customers.

Since opening, The Tattered Apron has served donuts, muffins, oatmeal cream pies, breads, pies, cakes, and their famous cheesecake tacos – all made from scratch.

"I love experimenting in the kitchen," Crystal Payton said. "I'm so determined and stubborn. If it doesn't work out, that just makes me want to try it again." For her,

the love of baking is tied to overcoming a challenge.

The couple also try to incorporate their own personalities and love of humor into their menu. While customers will find the traditional donut flavors available, The Tattered Apron likes to have a little more fun with its menu choices. One donut, called "Angry Neighbors," features orange zest and Sour Patch kids. Another – "Sibling Rivalry" – is half chocolate and half strawberry.

Many of The Tattered Apron's specialty donuts are dedicated to the Paytons' family members or members of the community. A soon-to-be-released spicy donut called "Liar, Liar Pants on Fire" is dedicated to the Crestline Fire Department.

The Paytons want The Tattered Apron to be more than just another business in Crestline – they want to be part of the community. They often invite community input in their recipe testing. Crystal Payton said she frequently takes samples of new dishes to surrounding businesses and asks them for feedback.

In the short time they've been open, The Tattered Apron has hosted a few community events, like a "paint and sip" night. They plan to have live music guests from time to time and want to host other evening gathering events. Currently, they are searching for a space to host a cookie swap in December and plan to host carolers. They are also working on arranging

a visit from Santa closer to Christmas.

One of their more ambitious plans is to set up a scholarship fund for Crestline students to help them complete their high school education.

"We want to be able to impact the community," Tommy Payton said.

While serving quality products is their focus, the couple hope to build something that can outlast them. They intend to build up The Tattered Apron into something that they can pass along to their children.

"We want to be able to leave a legacy for them that they can carry on," Tommy Payton said.

Hannah Bryan is a correspondent for AIM Media Midwest.



Photos by Hannah Bryan | AIM Media Midwest

The bakery is known for its cheesecake tacos.



On display inside the bakery is Crystal Payton's mother's apron, along with an apron that belonged to former Checkers Pizza owner Bill Christman.



Cabin at Willow Hollow features artisans' crafts

Submitted

A log cabin located on Stetzer Road, five miles east of Bucyrus, is home of the Cabin at Willow Hollow, an art and craft boutique.

The cabin is filled with hand-crafted hardwood, live edge and reclaimed barn wood furniture, along with art, crafts and selected antiques. During the fall and Christmas seasons, the cabin features the fine art of more than 40 Ohio artisans, all for sale.

Owners Dick and Wanda Hancock have been in the art and craft business for more than 40 years. They also participate in major art/

craft shows that showcase Dick's wood-working in Ohio and Pennsylvania.

For 20 years they have had an open house, during the fall/Christmas season in their home. In the last 12 years, the open house has been located at the cabin.

This year's open house is Wednesday, Nov. 6 to Sunday Nov. 10. The cabin regular open hours are Thursday, Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

In December before Christmas, the cabin is open Thursday & Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving Day.



Courtesy photo

Georgia Mills Carpet celebrated their 28th anniversary on June 6.

Georgia Mills Carpet celebrates 28 years in business

Submitted story

Georgia Mills Carpet celebrated their 28th anniversary this year on June 6.

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Burkhart Farm Center serving local communities

Submitted story

Burkhart Farm Center, Inc., Bucyrus, Ohio is a 4 generation family owned and operated Case IH dealership which began in 1983, as an International Harvester dealership.

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Mid-Ohio Powersports - Your Trusted Local Powersports Source Since 1974!

Submitted

Mid-Ohio Powersports has a more than 50-year history of providing outstanding motorcycle, ATV, and utility vehicle sales support, service, parts, and accessories to powersports enthusiasts. The dedicated staff are all fellow riders and bring that passion to serve the powersports community.

Over the years the dealership has expanded, and currently offers products from Suzuki, Honda, Yamaha, Kawasaki, CFMOTO, Royal Enfield, ARGO, Piranha/YCF, Kayo, and Arctic Cat. These brands maintain a strong reputation for producing high quality, reliable, and exciting motorcycles, ATVs and Side by Sides (UTVs). Yamaha also provides gas and electric golf cars, and

electric Power Assist bicycles.

Mid-Ohio Powersports carries a good selection of new and used powersports equipment, and also buys used motorcycles, ATVs and UTVs. The Parts and Accessories department is well stocked and ready to help with all things necessary and cool to make your ride better and more fun. The Service Department has the expertise you need to get going again, put those new tires on, or to maintain your favorite ride.

If you are a new or experienced rider, you can trust Mid-Ohio Powersports to provide the help and support you need. Stop by and visit the store at 494 Harcourt Rd., Mount Vernon, OH, or call 740-397-5272. The website is www.mid-ohio.com.

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Gary Budzak | The Gazette

Liberty Tavern's Polaris location recently opened.

Polaris now has Liberty – the Tavern

By Gary Budzak
gbudzak@aimmediamidwest.com

COLUMBUS — Liberty Tavern has opened a second location in Delaware County, at 2170 Polaris Parkway.

The restaurant is at the site of the former Mellow Mushroom pizzeria in a strip mall across from a car wash. Gone is the enormous Incredible Hulk statue, the busy, dark hippie trappings and classic rock setlist of Mellow Mushroom; replaced with signs of Columbus suburbs and country music playing. A prominent bar area, large windows and garage doors that can open to the patio area contributed to the bright new feel. The focal point is a wall that says,

“Give me Liberty...” However, the restaurant is not overtly political from what we saw.

As befits its name, Liberty Tavern serves up a variety of American food, but with some offerings that differ from the original Powell location at 50 S. Liberty St. Everything seemingly has a twist from a traditional recipe — for example, crab cakes were called crab beignets (\$14), ball-shaped and consisting of blue crab, shallots, panko breading, and herbed caper roulade. These were part of what the menu called shareables, appetizers that included onion rings, chicken wings, wild mushroom toast, a dip trio for tortilla chips, cheese curds, pretzel

sticks, pork belly skewers and “smashed spuds.” Prices ranged from \$10-\$16 for the apps.

The menu also has handhelds, another name for sandwiches and the like. These include a cheesesteak, Wagyu cheeseburger, roasted chicken, beef birria grilled cheese, Angus beef burger, and lobster tacos. Prices range from \$16-\$24. Main courses featured a 14-oz. New York Strip, chicken fettucine, ravioli carbonara, salmon, scallops and rice, sea bass, and shrimp rigatoni. Prices were \$22-\$36.

There are five kinds of pizza on the menu, costing \$17-\$18. There are two soups, \$7-\$9, a New England clam chowder,

and a South Indian rasam. Five salads, \$14-\$16, are the Caesar, chopped, Cobb, strawberry with spinach, and wedge. Desserts, \$10-\$12, are “apple pie bars,” brownies, butter and carrot cakes, and cream pie. Oh, and kids’ meals are \$9 (the price include drink and fried), among them are chicken tenders, hamburger, and pizza.

Brunch is available on weekends, and being that this is a tavern, one can partake of a mimosa or bloody Mary. Breakfast fare includes tacos, burritos, sandwiches, oatmeal, chicken and waffles, avocado toast and steak and eggs. Prices range from \$6 to \$25.

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Photos by Gary Budzak | The Gazette



Liberty

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Our visit was on a weekend, with brunch as part of the selection (from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.). A fried chicken sandwich and pancakes were ordered. The fried chicken (\$18) had a buttermilk batter, Duke's mayonnaise, Kaiser dill pickle, special sauce on a brioche bun that was tasty and juicy. It was served

with a side of crunchy fries (other sides included coleslaw, polenta, salad and vegetables). The pancakes (\$12) were butter-soaked and came with a unique-tasting bourbon maple syrup and berry compote.

After having the aforementioned crab cakes, we couldn't finish the entrees, eating half the servings. As leftovers, the pancakes reheated fine, and the fried chicken sandwich was still good cold. We just had soft

drinks on our visit, but libations abounded, with specialty cocktails ranging from \$10-\$14. Some carried on the Americana theme, such as the tempting American Pie (bitters, citrus, honey, limoncello, orange liqueur and vodka).

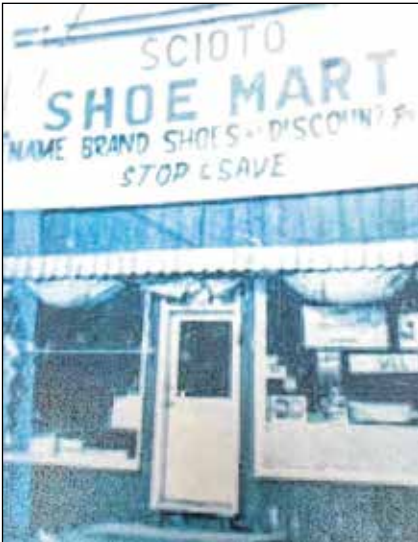
Another plus with the Liberty Tavern is that you can order online if you'd like. Hours are 4-10 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Thursday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Saturday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday, with the bar closing an hour after the kitchen. Mondays feature a trivia contest, if you're into that sort of thing.

For more information, call 614-392-0623, visit Liberty Tavern (Facebook) or check out libertytavern.us/liberty-tavernpolaris (website).

Assistant Editor Gary Budzak photographs and reports on stories in eastern Delaware County and surrounding areas. He can be reached at 740-413-0906.

Scioto Shoe Mart: Providing great comfort, great fit for 60 years



Courtesy photo

More than 50 years ago the start of a small shoe store in Portsmouth, Ohio, was founded by Thomas and Dolores Selbee. It was a dream, with a lot of hard work, determination, and blessings from the Lord.

Submitted story

MARION — More than 50 years ago the start of a small shoe store in Portsmouth, Ohio, was founded by Thomas and Dolores Selbee. It was a dream, with a lot of hard work, determination, and blessings from the Lord.

That one small store became three large stores serving customers throughout Ohio. Each store is still operated by family and now are three generations. Hopefully, the fourth will be following.

Our Marion store has been in business for 32

years is operated by Shannon Stark, a certified pedorthist, who strives on helping her customers and addressing their footwear needs.

Our values have not wavered on trying to provide our customers the best product and fit for comfort. We search hard to provide great customer service and expertise.

Constantly attending lectures, meetings with health professionals and more to have as much knowledge as we can so that we can go forward. Every foot is not the same, so we strive to offer a variety of shoes,

sizes and widths to offer a variety selection for our customers. From work boots to casual, to dress, athletic and kids, we provide footwear for the entire families' needs.

On top of running a successful business, Scioto Shoe Mart strives to give back to its communities. Whether it be donating shoes to local churches or nearby children's hospital, going into local schools to fit kids, or participating in local events. We could not do this without the community's love and support, for this we are most thankful.

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Why you should shop local for the holidays and beyond

Various components come together to make the holiday season a festive time of year. There is a lot to get done in a short amount of time during the holiday season, and part of that includes shopping for all of the family members and friends on your shopping list. Shopping can be a complicated process that involves identifying which stores will be the best places to shop. Local retailers make the perfect place to shop for holiday items.

According to the American Express Business Economic Impact Study, more than two-thirds of every dollar spent with a local business stays in the community. Indeed, shopping local benefits consumer and community alike. The following are some of the many perks to shopping locally throughout the holiday season.

- **Personalized attention:** Small businesses are known for their personalized customer service and owners and staff are often lauded for taking the time to interact and learn about their customers, a dynamic that is impossible at larger retailers.
- **Meet and interact with people:** Shopping in-person at local stores, you'll see faces from your community and become better known in the local area.
- **Shorter lines:** Local stores are bound to have smaller crowds and thus shorter lines. That translates to less stress and hassle when it comes to getting in and out with holiday gifts.
- **Smaller carbon footprint:** Pollution, traffic congestion, habitat loss, and resource depletion may not occur on the same levels when shopping locally compared to patronizing big box stores. That's because local retailers tend to create or source their products locally, whereas many big box stores secure their goods overseas.
- **Easier parking:** This goes hand-in-hand with smaller crowds, as shopping locally does not typically require driving up and down endless aisles at malls or standalone retail stores in an effort to find a parking spot. Local retailers in town may have on-street parking or closed lots that are convenient to shoppers.
- **Small batch shopping experience:** Consumers can secure items in small businesses that are not carbon copies of those found across the country at major retail chains. When seeking a unique, thoughtful gift, shopping locally is the way to go.

Shopping locally this holiday season provides an array of benefits to consumers, and helps to solidify a strong Main Street in communities.



Why supporting local small businesses matters

The holiday season is a time of year when shopping takes center stage. While online giants and big box retailers seem to be everywhere, offering an endless array of products with the convenience of low prices, small businesses provide a range of benefits that go far beyond the ease of a mouse click or mountains of merchandise. Shopping local retailers is more than just a transaction - it is crucial for maintaining the economic foundation of local commu-

nities. Let's take a look at the many ways it pays to shop small businesses during the holidays and all year long.

- **Strengthen the local economy:** A large percentage of the money spent at small businesses stays in the community. That's because these businesses often are owned and operated by local residents who are invested in the community themselves. Various studies indicate that for every \$100 spent at a

small business, roughly \$70 stays in the community.

- **Enhanced customer service:** Owners and employees of small businesses have a keen interest in keeping customers happy. They often do so by providing superior customer service. Tailoring recommendations, exhibiting a willingness to accommodate special requests,

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Submitted story

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Support

From page 16

- offering a more engaging shopping experience, and being more friendly and connected with regular customers sets many small businesses apart.
- **Support the community:** Small businesses serve the community through the products and services they offer, and many give back in other ways as well. Small, locally owned businesses often sponsor schools, sports teams and charities. This helps foster a sense of belonging in the community.
- **Innovative offerings:** Small businesses are not beholden to corporate policies or franchise restrictions, so they can more readily bring new life to exist-

ing ideas and trends. Small businesses can offer customers different options that larger retailers cannot match.

- **Job creation:** Small businesses employ a significant percentage of the workforce and frequently provide jobs that might not be available in larger corporate settings. The U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy says small businesses have generated 12.9 million net new jobs over the past 25 years, accounting for two out of every three jobs added to the U.S. economy. Keeping residents working helps strengthen local communities.

There are numerous benefits to shopping at small businesses this Small Business Saturday and throughout the year. Such firms help to establish a more resilient, diverse and bustling local community.



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Add seasonal bazaars to your list of holiday shopping locations

There is no shortage of options to find every item on your holiday shopping list. Shopping malls, online retailers and mom and pop stores along Main Street can be great spots to grab holiday deals, but shoppers also can find great gifts at holiday fairs and bazaars.

Bazaars are found all over the world, but are notable to Middle Eastern and Asian countries. Bazaars are marketplaces that feature several small shops or vendor stalls. In some countries, bazaars are outdoors and covered by tents, while in others they feature several stalls set up in large rooms.

Holiday bazaars often pop up during the holiday season and mimic international marketplaces. They may be hosted by cities or towns, schools or places of worship. Sometimes they are fundraising opportunities, with non-profit organizations charging a stall- or table-renting fee for bazaar participants. Holiday fairs and bazaars often bring

together an array of different retailers, many of whom are small businesses selling interesting wares.

Shoppers should take advantage of every opportunity to visit these holiday bazaars because they will only be around for a short time. Here's a look at some of the benefits of bazaar shopping for the holidays.

- Patronize small businesses. Holiday bazaars often bring together small businesses that may not normally have storefronts. This allows shoppers to meet the individuals behind businesses they already patronize or discover new firms they were previously unacquainted with.
- Shop unique wares. Holiday bazaars may showcase items not easily found elsewhere, from handcrafted jewelry to unique soaps to custom woodworking items.
- Develop new relationships. Shopping at holiday bazaars enables you to

meet and interact with new people. This can expand your social circles and may even expand your professional network.

- Enjoy the shopping experience. Shopping away from the bustle of larger, busier retail stores gives you a break from the harried shopping experience many experience during the holiday season. Rather, holiday fairs and bazaars typically are less crowded and engage at a slower pace. Plus, they may have a more homespun decorating design that can have you feeling like you're shopping in a Christmas village.
 - Take advantage of food vendors. Food vendors likely will be mixed within the offerings of the holiday bazaar. That gives you opportunity to take the day off from cooking and enjoy some savory and sweet bites while grabbing gifts.
- Holiday shopping bazaars are great places to shop for the holidays.

Family tradition lives on at Link's Country Meats

Submitted

The Link family has been providing meat processing services for the surrounding area for 6 generations. Starting from on-the-farm butchering to a State Inspected facility for the high-quality processing of locally raised livestock.

Today, Link's Country Meats is being operated by generations four, five and six as the latest graduate has come on board full time.

At our business just outside of Crestline, you will find a small retail store onsite stocked with fresh and frozen cuts of meats all sourced locally. But what

makes us unique is the variety of specialty meats and sausages with flavors and varieties that can only be found with the Link name on the package.

Sausage, (including multiple varieties of bratwurst, Italian Sausage, Chorizo, maple flavors, smoked sausage, kielbasa-many in links, patties, bulk or smoked), hams, bacons, hotdogs, snack sticks, summer sausage, trail-style bologna all made from our own proprietary recipes, many which have been handed down through the generations.

Link's also serves wholesale and food service customers, where you can enjoy our meats or sausages in local restaurants,

concession stands, food trailers, and a few small retailers.

But to stay true to our roots, our core business is custom harvest and processing of livestock, under state inspection. We understand the commitment our local farmers put into raising their animals and we provide the same level of commitment, integrity and quality into processing their livestock into quality cuts as well as specialty meats and sausages using the same recipes we use in our own products.

We thank our current customer for trusting us for this service and if your new to us, come check us!



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Cashman's drive-through has been serving the community since 1979



Cashman elite fence with board fence in the background.

Discover Cashman's Farm & Feed Supply: A Local Legacy

Submitted

Have you ever traveled north out of Delaware on Route 42 towards Ashley? If so, you've likely passed a unique landmark — Cashman's Farm & Feed Supply. Established in 1979, Cashman's has served Central Ohio for over 45 years.

As one of the first drive-through feed stores in the nation, it continues to offer quality products at reasonable prices. Through the years, the offerings have expanded from feed and bedding to include farm fencing, rubber mats, and other supplies for both agricultural and non-agricultural needs. Whether you're driving through for a scenic country tour or looking to upgrade your home gym, Cashman's is a trusted resource in our community. We invite you to explore what we've been offering for nearly half a century.

The Convenience of Our Drive-Through Feed Store

At Cashman's, we proudly stock Buckeye Nutrition feeds for horses, along with a variety of feeds for goats, pigs, chickens, and more. Our drive-through offers wildlife and bird seed in both small and large bag sizes, as well as an extensive range of bedding products—from large flakes to small fines and even wood or straw pellets. To ensure quality, all our hay and straw are kept under cover so you always get dry bales, no matter the season. Our goal is to make feeding your animals and maintaining your farm as convenient as possible.

Fencing Options for Your Farm and Home

Over the years, Cashman's has expanded to offer an extensive selection of farm and residential fencing solutions. Whether you're looking for a traditional

fence to enhance curb appeal or a practical containment solution for animals and children, we've got options for every need. We stock southern yellow pine cylinder posts and poplar boards that give a classic look, as well as modern fencing options designed for ease of maintenance. On our website, you'll find calculators to help you plan your project, and our in-house experts are available to guide you through the process. While we don't offer installation, we're happy to recommend trusted local installers.

Stalls and Shelters for Safe Animal Spaces

Beyond fencing, creating safe and comfortable spaces for your animals is essential. Cashman's offers easy-to-assemble DIY Shelter Kits, as well as modular or frame-in stalls that can be customized to fit your needs. Whether you're looking to

set up a new barn space or upgrade an existing one, we have the products and expertise to help you ensure your animals' well-being.

Rubber Mats and Mud Solutions for All Applications

From barns to workshops to home gyms, rubber mats are a versatile and durable solution for various environments. If they're strong enough for horses, they'll definitely hold up for your needs, whether in fitness centers, manufacturing spaces, or even muddy walkways around your property. We also carry products to help manage mud and keep high-traffic areas safe and clean.

Whether you need fence materials, a bale of straw for your lawn, or rubber flooring for your gym, Cashman's is here to help. Visit us Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. or explore our offerings anytime online at Cashmans.com.

Iberia

From page 3

School and the most recent owner of Smitty's and Iberia Earthworm Construction, LLC. He and his wife, Karen, purchased Iberia Earthworm in 2012 from Dan Busler and now employs 15-20 in the business. The company serves Morrow and surrounding counties with services including asphalt, chip and seal, seal coating, excavating and snow removal.

Cortez said he grew up with Iberia Earthworm since his dad, Robert Cortez, worked for them many years. Louis Cortez mowed the lawn for the business as a kid and then worked for Earthworm. He started Cortez Seal Coating in 1995 and then merged that business with Iberia Earthworm when he and Karen purchased it in 2012.

Cortez said the best part of a local business is the people and taking something from nothing and seeing the end result. After 13 years owning Iberia Earthworm, he has great satisfaction in seeing most workers return to work every year, and this year, seeing every single person return to work this summer. He believes it's important to be involved day to day in every aspect of the business. His employees know they can call him anytime with questions they have on the job.

"The Lord has blessed us," said Cortez, whose grandparents were immigrants from Mexico. "With hard work comes reward.



Smitty's in Iberia has been a gas station since the 1940s. Owned by Louis and Karen Cortez, the building was renovated in 2018.

Alberta Stojkovic | AIM Media Midwest

Karen and I give back to the community in any way we can."

Former Morrow County Commissioner Richard "Dick" Miller gave some of the early history of Smitty's. His father, Paul D. Miller, owned the store from 1944 to 1955-1956 when it was Miller's Shell Station. His father sold the station to Hiram Smith who changed the name to Smitty's. His sons carried on the business until it was sold to Cortez.

Miller's dad had a variety of services, which included sharpening knives and mower blades, selling tires, batteries and fireworks, along with fishing tackle. He had the first soda fountain in the area and was famous for his root beer floats. His dad would drive to Crystal Ice Locker in

Mount Gilead to get ice to sell at the store and for the few people in town who still had an ice box. He would drive with his dad to St. James Railroad a mile away to drop off the village mail, and he brought back mail to the town for the Iberia Post Office.

Miller recalled that Iberia was quite a trade center

in the 1940s and 1950s. There was the popular Edie's Restaurant, Thatcher's Grocery, two service stations, a slaughter house, post office and Iberia Earthmoving, which later became Iberia Earthworm Construction.

Alberta Stojkovic is a correspondent for AIM Media Midwest. She can be reached at albertaellen16@gmail.com.

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and operated real estate and auction company that provides our communities with many years of experience and expertise in auctions & real estate, strong marketing & negotiation skills, professionalism, and honest and ethical treatment. Since opening, we have remained dedicated to the communities we serve by supporting, volunteering, and donating our time and services to various community functions, events, clubs, & foundations. Giving back to the communities who have supported

our company has always been and will continue to be a main priority.”

Craig A. Miley Realty & Auction has two offices, the main office located at 703 Harding Way West, Galion, Ohio 44833, & a branch office located in Bucyrus. Whether you are ready to have an auction or to buy or sell a home, condo, land, farm, or commercial property in or around Crawford, Morrow, Richland or surrounding counties, we are ready & excited to help make the process much easier for you! Reach us at 419-468-4602 or visit our website at www.MileyRealty.com.

Dealing with a traumatic loss? Cornerstone of Hope can help

Submitted

The Mid-Ohio Traumatic Loss Response Team at Cornerstone of Hope offers free support for traumatic loss survivors in Delaware, Morrow, Marion, and Crawford Counties.

We provide prompt responses for those affected by suicide, homicide, and substance-related deaths and strive to connect survivors with programs, services, and resources to support them on their grief journey.

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