

Delaware County merchants urge residents to shop big in small places

Get away from the box stores and come to the walkable towns to shop, merchant groups say.

[Pete Bannan](#) November 24, 2022 at 7:45 AM EST



Urging Delaware County residents to shop locally for holiday gifts are, from left, Discover Haverford's Sarah Cazella, project coordinator; Jeanne Angell, executive director; and

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State Street in Media is home to many shops and restaurants. It is part of the charm of "Everybody's Home Town" that has made it among the 50 best places to live in the United States, according to Money magazine.

(COURTESY PHOTO)

Small Business Saturday is the day that clicks the "like" on shopping locally.

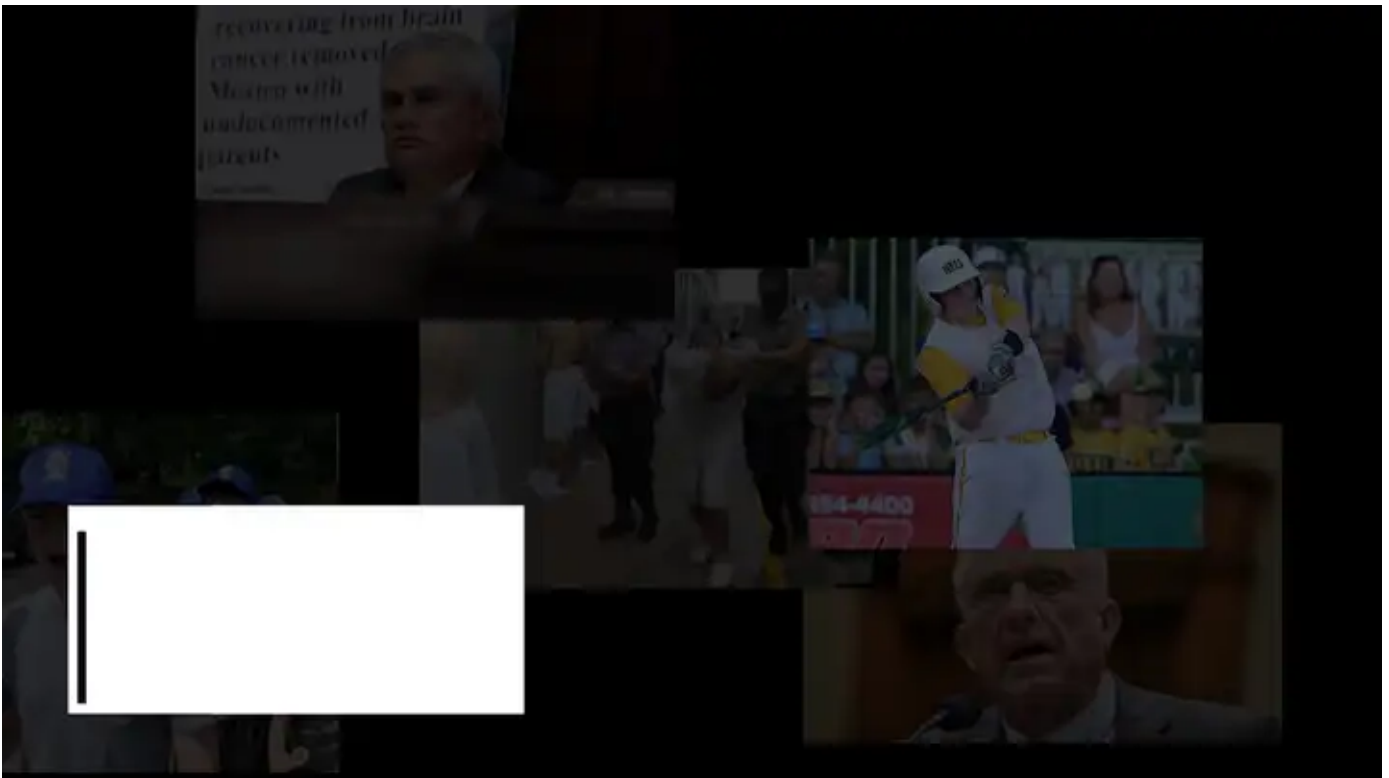
From Wayne to Lansdowne, local businesses help make their town unique and the local business associations have rolled out events to encourage residents to shop local.

"We hope to encourage people to patronize all sorts of small businesses this holiday," said [Delaware County Chamber of Commerce](#) President Trish McFarland. "In addition to our wonderful retail options, there are dining establishments, personal service providers, even local artisans that need our support. All holiday season long."

According to the U.S. Small Business Association, Small Business Saturday, founded by American Express, is a day dedicated to supporting the diverse range of local businesses that create jobs, help boost the economy, and enhance neighborhoods around the country.

According to American Express, the projected total reported spending among U.S. consumers who shopped at independent retailers and restaurants on Small Business Saturday last year hit a record high at an estimated \$23.3 billion.

The SBA has co-sponsored Small Business Saturday since 2011, and the agency continues to help entrepreneurs leverage new opportunities with the 13th annual Small Business Saturday.



Small businesses are defined as those with less than 100

employees and they make up 98% of the economy in Delaware County, over 12,000 businesses in all. .

Small Business Saturday was created in 2010 and recognized in 2011 by the U.S. Senate.

'Back in the swing'

In Haverford Township, officials from the local economic development organization, [Discover Haverford](#) say business is back and ready to welcome the public after the uncertainty of the pandemic years.

"It's been a crazy few years. Now that we are back in the swing of being together, come out, shop, support the businesses, be with your community. Now that we have it we should partake and enjoy being able to do that again," said Melissa Batchelor, program director at Discover Haverford.

Back on Saturday will be the H-Town Holiday Passport Shop Small Saturday Guide, which will be given out at the Discover Haverford Booth in the Kelly Center at 4 E. Eagle Road. The Passport offers specials and promotions for the day and offers the chance of a raffle.

Parking at all meters and in township lots will be free Saturday.

The booth will have chocolate and candy canes for the kids.

The first 50 customers will receive a free reusable shopping bag and shoppers that complete their passport will be entered for a raffle of gift cards.

Haverford also has a gift card program available online for use at township businesses.

On Small Business Saturday until Christmas they will match what you pay for a gift card with a second card at 50 percent of the value. For example, if you purchase a \$50 card, a second card is \$25. Executive Director Jeanne Angell said funding for that came from Haverford Township's American Rescue Plan Funds.

On Dec. 10, Discover Haverford will hold its first winter festival along the Brookline Boulevard shopping district.

The Havertown Holiday Festival will be a family friendly event focused on Christmas, Hanukkah and winter fun and will include costumed characters, live holiday music, story time and crafts for kids, food trucks and vendors, beer & hot adult beverages, a holiday marketplace, an ice sculpture demonstration, a tree lighting and a menorah.

'Now more than ever'

In Ridley Township the commissioners are supporting small business Saturday by encouraging all residents to shop in their local businesses, they passed a resolution at last

week's meeting in support of their local businesses.

"The businesses along MacDade and Chester Pike, now more than ever need people's help from COVID and tough years. Nobody likes to see closed doors so let's go out and support them," said commissioners President Robert Willert.

David Fairman, executive director of the [Media Business Authority](https://visitmediapa.com), said his association has many activities planned, starting with Small Business Saturday. Check <https://visitmediapa.com> for them.

On Monday, he was out at the Plum Street Mall overseeing the placing of decorations.

"A number of businesses are staying open late, offering specials and we'll have complementary kettle corn, freshly popped right on Plum Street Mall for everybody who is visiting downtown media in the State Street District," he said. "Our small businesses have enjoyed support from our residents and visitors. They are ready for the holiday season, their shelves are stocked and they are looking forward to customers shopping small and thinking locally," he said.

He noted that great gifts can be found in all price ranges for everyone at the more than 100 independent businesses along the State Street Business Corridor and parking is free through the weekend.

On Sunday, Nov. 27th is Santa's Parade in Media. There will be a block party from 2:30 to 5 p.m., a fun run followed by Santa's parade at 5 p.m.

"Residents can find unique products, some fair trade products, handmade products and they will be supporting the small business community at the same time," Fairman said.

In addition to Small Business Saturday the Media Business Authority will host horse drawn carriage rides every Wednesday night from Thanksgiving until Christmas.

"Every Saturday something is happening, on Dec. 3 is the life-size snow globe. It's complementary," Fairman said.

"Kids and families can climb inside the snow globe and have their pictures taken."

For the adults' enjoyment on Dec. 10, Media will have a pop-up bottle shop at the Media Arts Council with Blue distillery.

'Niche businesses'

Paul Seligson, president of the [Newtown Square Business Association](#), said his community features destination shops and longtime businesses that are excited for the coming holiday season.

There will be a tree lighting Dec. 4 at 5 p.m. with a Christmas

market in St. Albans Circle. It will include hot chocolate and complementary chocolate-covered pretzels.

"People can browse around and visit the stores there," Seligson said. "We have a number of niche businesses and what I like to refer to as the treasures of Newtown Square where people come to make a trip to Newtown Square just for those businesses. One of them might be Accents by Michele. She sells incredible orchids and flower arrangements and dried flowers. Christopher Chocolates Gifts is another. they started Irish potatoes in Delaware County. "

Seligson said Frames and Co. has been in Newtown for over 14 years. He also raved about Luigi & Giovanni Deli and catering.

"They have the finest cheeses, olives and prosciutto directly from Italy, wonderful olive oils," he said. "Winerich Bakery is an old fashioned German bakery. Good tasting everything is really big, lots of butter."

Seligson continued, "Bunny Hare's gift shop has really cool, not over expensive things that bring a smile to your face, really drawl humor."

He also praised the local restaurants, including Yuki Sushi, Rey Azteca Mexican and Casey's Public House.

'Really nice place'

Tiara Orange president of [Lansdowne Business & Professional Association](#) said the group is giving out holiday coupons to promote the district, with a focus on creating events such as the tree lighting on the 3rd.

"Businesses will stay open, bring items to the sidewalk and encourage people to shop throughout the day before the festivities in the evening," she said.

Orange said many businesses in her community switched to both in person and online to survive the pandemic and new businesses have brought excitement to town, including Camellia Coffee House, which has breakfast and lunch and has vegan and vegetarian options.

"To see the needs of the community met through having something like that is really wonderful," she said. "The biggest thing is Lansdowne is a fun community type of neighborhood. Everyone is very supportive. The businesses are very friendly and it's a really nice place to come and shop."

In Wayne, Deanna Doane, president of [Wayne Business Association](#) said there will be free parking on Saturdays as part of an extended Small Business Saturday to bring people into town and a number of businesses will have gift card

giveaways.

The annual Windows of Wayne is underway with judging on Nov. 30.

She said there is a nice mixture of businesses in the district, which adds to the allure of finding different things in a walkable town.

"There is a sense of community support: If I don't go to Theresa's or I don't shop at Louella's, if that goes away, it's not nearly as attractive to live in Wayne," Doane said.

She said there's a mix: clothes for college women, older women as well as places like Wheelhouse Cards, a sports card store at 106 E. Lancaster Ave.

"He can't keep up with the business. He has just hit the nail on the head with everything. He holds promotions bringing the Villanova wildcat there and gets students coming from the middle school," she said. "That's been a great addition because it brings in walk-in traffic as well as a lot of boutiques. It really does help."

Doane said many of the businesses and boutiques in Wayne also sell online.

Doane said Dec. 2-3 is their big Christmas weekend in Wayne.

Friday evening there will be carriage rides, arts and crafts at the fire house, carolers, tree lighting and Santa's arrival. Saturday it is the Radnor Memorial Library Elves for Shelves Fun Run and 5k at 8 a.m., and the Santa Parade with Santa pictures at 10 a.m.

'Best investment'

The Chamber's McFarland noted that the Holiday Village at the Rose Tree Festival of Lights in Rose Tree Park will be back for a second year with local shops, crafts, food trucks and vendors on Friday and Saturday nights in December.

Santa Claus and the Springton Lake Select Choir will join Delaware County Council, the Delaware County Department of Parks and Recreation, and hundreds of residents to celebrate the opening of the 2022 Festival of Lights on Friday, Dec. 2 at 5 p.m. in Rose Tree

Local vendors and food trucks will participate in the Holiday Village on December 2, 3, 9, 10, 16 and 17.

Each night will feature different vendors and food, so residents are encouraged to visit the Holiday Village multiple times this season. Check the website for updates regarding weather and possible changes in the schedule:

www.holidayvillagedelco.com.

"Small businesses are the backbone of our community.

Every little town has a Main Street with small businesses," said Leah Davey of Media, who is a social media [influencer on Instagram](#). Known locally as Main Line Ma she shares deals, events and general posts for local businesses, with the sole goal of helping bring them more attention. "People who live in our community are the ones who are helping to keep these businesses on their feet."

"It's like the best investment in your community, to shop small," she said.

Davey said the Blue Beret, a children's shop, is a great shop in Wayne for clothing, gifts, shoes, accessories and toys.

"My daughter's favorite store is Deal's Variety. She loves it," she said. "It's so rare you can take little kids to a store we were able to visit when we were little."

She also praised local restaurants.

"We love Brick and Brew. They have two, Havertown and Media, and I love Fellini's," she said. "At the end of the day our area is such a special place because of the charm that small businesses give our neighborhoods. The biggest investment you can make into your home life is supporting those businesses that keep your hometown going."

Performers at Media's Plum Street Mall. (COURTESY
PHOTO)