



What a novelty! Meeting the person who made your gift and discussing the transaction

My Holiday Shopping List:

Soap
Music
Knit hat
Salmon
Photograph
T-shirt
Beer
Vodka
Books
Dinner
Massage

By the time you read this, I will have purchased all of the locally made products or services listed above for Christmas gifts for my friends, family, myself and perfect strangers.

I take pride in my consumer choices. I might even say I feel a little sanctimonious because over the years I've encountered a lot of people (several of them paid staffers) in the Buy Local movement who talk the talk but don't walk the walk. I've seen it with my own eyes, and the hypocrisy undermines everything die hard Buy Local proponents try to accomplish for rural America.

This holiday season, I urge anyone with last-minute shopping needs to seek out locally produced goods and services from independent artisans and entrepreneurs in our community and support them. That might mean buying direct from them in person, through their websites, or patronizing a local retailer who carries these products.

Does it really take all that much more effort? No, it does not. What it asks of consumers is to become aware of these goods and services, of cultivating curiosity in your community's home-sourced economy, of walking the streets and exploring shops and restaurants you've driven by a hundred times.

I stake my credibility on making these claims because of my role as an independent

publisher of books about Oregon that are exclusively available from independent bookstores, gift shops, my website and out of the back of my truck. I would have never gone on to sell almost 30,000 books in Oregon the last decade unless consumers bought into my concept of sustainable literature, made the extra effort and paid a bit more. I try to thank everyone personally I meet along the way of this improbable marketing journey, and it's proved to be the most rewarding experience of my creative life.

What a novelty! Meeting the person who made your gift and discussing the transaction! Learning the passion behind the product or service! A real face-to-face kind of thing where handshakes and smiles are common. It routinely happens when you choose to buy local.

I can attest to the power of this face-to-face experience. On Saturday, Nov. 28, I sat in front of Godfather's Books in Astoria as part of a Small Business Saturday promotion, typing away on my typewriter and welcoming people to the store. I was joined by Astoria musician Luke Ydstie, who entertained the customers with some marvelous new songs from his debut CD, "Collected Essential Works," one of the most intriguing records I've heard in years. I sold a few books, Luke sold a few CDs, and we got to meet the people who supported us. It wasn't even really about the sale. It was more about the meeting.

Try buying local this year. And if you are already committed to this ethos, redouble your efforts.

Matt Love is the author/editor of 14 books about Oregon. His books are available through coastal bookstores or his web site, nestuccaspitpress.com.



Submitted photo

Astoria musician Luke Ydstie's first solo album, "Collected Essential Works," is available for purchase at Godfather's Books in Astoria. notforsale

Become aware of these goods and services, of cultivating curiosity in your community's home-sourced economy, of walking the streets and exploring shops and restaurants you've driven by a hundred times.



Photo by Erick Bengel

Cannon Beach Distillery owner Mike Selberg displays his award-winning craft spirits. The made-from-scratch spirits sold at the distillery are created entirely onsite and include whiskey, rum, and an original agave spirit.



Photo by Lynette Rae McAdams

Sportsmen's Cannery in Seaview, Washington, a local outfit that cleans and processes fish for sports fishermen, sells a variety of flavored and packaged tuna, salmon and oysters.



Photo by Don Anderson

Fernhill Glass in Astoria sells hand-blown glass items, including ornaments, vases and glass mugs, onsite.



Submitted photo

SunRose Gallery owner Cathy Tippin makes jewelry out of china in her Seaside shop.

the arts
VISUAL ARTS • LITERATURE • THEATER • MUSIC & MORE

Story by MATT LOVE