

**By JOYCE M.
ROSENBERG**
Associated Press

Meagher's advice for store owners: "Don't think about your customer as someone who's going to buy something."



LEFT: John Dudas, owner of Carol and John's Comic Book Shop, poses during New Comic Day in Cleveland on Nov. 8. Some smaller retailers will tug at shoppers' heartstrings during the holidays, trying to create an emotional experience or connection that a big national chain might not provide. Dudas recently participated in Local Comic Shop Day, which he calls the comic book industry's equivalent of Black Friday. People lined up outside his store for limited-edition comics, and had a great time while they waited. **ABOVE:** Christy Abulaban and Abner Rondon look over new releases of comic books.

Independent retailers in Portland, Oregon, take part in Little Boxes, an annual alternative to shopping at big-box national chains that offer big discounts during the entire Thanksgiving weekend. Started in 2011, Little Boxes gives shoppers the chance to win raffle prizes according to how many purchases they make at participating stores. In its first year, there were 90

Diane Roth uses service all year long to create a connection with customers. The owner of clothing boutique L'Armoire in New Canaan, Connecticut, Roth acts as much a concierge as a retailer. She'll allow customers to take several garments home to try on — or she'll send the clothes

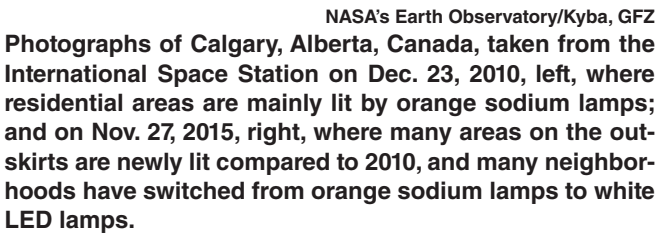
small-business owner

These services have helped Roth be less dependent on holiday shopping — unlike many retailers who expect to make up to half their annual revenue between Thanksgiving and Dec. 31. But Roth will have some events for the holidays, including bringing in a jeweler to help customers learn more about pieces they own, what

"Customers feel like they're part of the story," Quinn says.

By **MARCIA DUNN**
Associated Press

“Honestly, I had thought and assumed and hoped that



About the only places with dramatic declines in night light were in areas of conflict like Syria and Yemen, the researchers found. Australia also reported a noticeable drop, but that's because wildfires were raging early in the study.

More and more places are installing outdoor lighting given its low cost and the overall growth in communities' wealth, the scientists noted. Urban sprawl is also moving towns farther out. The outskirts of major cities in developing nations are brighten-

The International Dark-Sky Association, based in Tucson, Arizona, has been highlighting the hazards of artificial night light for decades.

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SELF-HELP GROUPS

AI-Anon (Astoria) — 7 p.m. Tuesday, Peace Lutheran Church, 565 12th St.; 12 p.m. Wednesday, First United Methodist Church, 1076 Franklin Ave. For information, call 503-325-1087; 7 p.m. Thursday, Crossroads Community Church, 40618 Old Highway 30, Svensen. For information, call 503-458-6467.

AI-Anon (Clatskanie) — 8 p.m. Monday, Faith Lutheran Church, 1010 N.E. Fifth St., Clatskanie. For information, call 503-728-3351.

AI-Anon (Nehalem) — 7 p.m. Monday, Riverbend Room, North County Recreation District, 36155 Ninth St. For information, call 503-368-8255.

Alcoholics Anonymous — To find a meeting in Clatsop County, call 971-601-9220, in Tillamook County, call 503-739-4856, or go to www.aa-oregon.org

Celebrate Recovery — 6 p.m. Thursday, The Table Church, 852 Broadway, Seaside. Faith-based 12-step program designed to help anyone struggling with hurts, habits and hangups, including drugs and alcohol, anger, co-dependence, domestic abuse or sex, food or pornography addictions. Being religious not required. Free dinner and child care provided. For information, call D.B. Lewis at 503-741-5977.

Men's Sexual Purity Recovery Group — Tuesday nights. Part of the Pure Life Alliance (www.purelifealliance.org) in Portland. For information, call the confidential voice mail at 503-750-0817 and leave a message.

TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) (Astoria) — 5 p.m. weigh-in, 5:30 p.m. meeting Tuesday, First Lutheran Church, 725 33rd St. For information, call Trisha Hayrynen at 503-298-9058.

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