

# Shop locally: It's a good deal for us all

The average American will spend more than \$900 on gifts for friends and families this Christmas season, according to experts.

Shoppers have lots of options, from "big-box" stores to regional chains to online.

Wallowa County residents have something that many communities its size envy — a thriving and bustling retail sector.

**EDITORIAL**

*Voice of the Chieftain*

Nowhere was that more obvious than during Small Business Saturday on Nov. 25.

Many businesses in the county took advantage of the promotion to boost their sales and notoriety.

Several stores held events in conjunction with the nationally recognized day, proclaimed by the Small Business Administration as a day to celebrate and support small businesses and all they do for their communities.

Throughout the next three weeks that comprise the traditional shopping season, local businesses of all descriptions will offer friendly customer service and a variety of helpful features you won't find in too many places.

The added advantage of community-wide promotions in both Joseph and Enterprise makes the chore of shopping that much more enjoyable. Jingle Through Joseph and Enterprise Winterfest are the icing on the cake, adding to excitement and activity in both cities.

While not everyone can do all of his or her shopping in Wallowa County, there are probably more opportunities for gift-buying here than you may think. The important thing is to get out and see what area shops have to offer.

You won't know until you go.

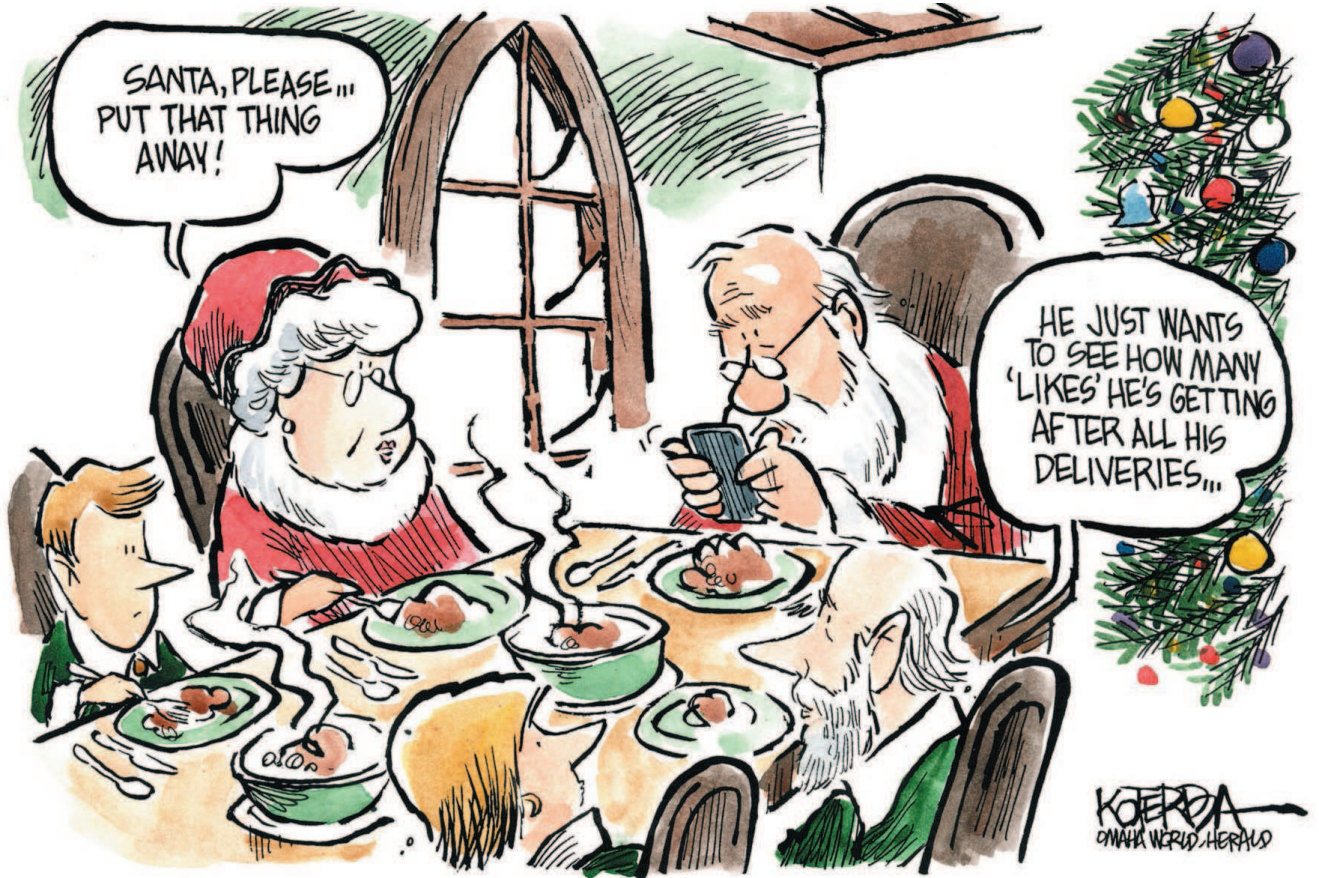
There are a long list of advantages to shopping local. You burn less gas, create less air pollution and spend less precious time in pursuit of gifts. And you avoid crowds and packed parking lots.

You also boost the fortunes of businesses that are always front and center when it comes to supporting the community.

Ask any nonprofit, school, church or organization about their base of support and they'll tell you it's not in Portland or Walla Walla or Lewiston.

Notice all of those sponsor signs that grace the sports arenas in the county? Very few of them carry the name of businesses located in other communities.

Shopping local also boosts the economy in Wallowa County, which has long-term benefits in many directions. Among them are much-needed jobs for county residents. This year, take the time to visit a local retailer you may not have frequented for a while. See what's new and exciting. We believe you will pleasantly surprised with the plethora of options



## Season is cause for thanksgiving

Several years ago I, along with other cities throughout the state, received a letter from a nice gentlemen from Portland State University thanking all of the public servants during the holiday season. It was such a nice letter and I never forgot it.

Every year around this time, I think about that letter, and I want to continue that heartfelt thank you.

So here is my thank you, and I am sure you will agree.

I would like to thank the road crews for keeping our roads open and safe while everyone is traveling during the holiday season. While you are driving to visit your family and friends, these folks are on call and quite often pulled away from their families to gravel streets and highways, plow snow and clear accident scenes. This includes ODOT, county and city road departments.

I would like to thank our law enforcement and dispatchers who really never get a holiday, they work around the clock helping those who lock their keys in their car while shopping, get a flat tire or just need directions. They also are called out by dispatchers for crimes that tend to increase during the holidays and respond to the many accidents on the roads due to inclement weather.

I would like to thank the health care professionals who also are always on call and or working to help you when you are sick or injured. They are always there for you in your time of need whether it be the EMTs, nurses, aides, lab, X-ray, doctors, cooks and office staff.

Someone is always available while you are with your families during the holidays. I have to add that I was so appreciative the



**GUEST COLUMN**

Michele Young

other day when I witnessed hospital maintenance staff graveling their parking lots when it was slick. Thank you.

I would like to thank the fire departments for so quickly responding to accidents and fires, especially when you just sat down to eat with your family and boom, the call comes. Thank you for coming to our aid always.

I would like to thank the public works departments for leaving their homes to help get water to your home because your pipes froze or check the sewer lines because your toilets aren't flushing. This happens frequently during the holidays.

They too have families they are spending the holidays with, but they come when called. Thank you for that because during the holidays and the rest of the year, water and sewer are critical needs.

I would like to thank my office staff who get the angry calls during the day if the streets are slick, people don't like the way the snow was plowed, water is frozen, sewer isn't working or when the police didn't respond immediately. We know these issues can be frustrating, but we really are here to help, and it can be difficult when being yelled at. I assure you that everyone is doing the best job possible to make sure your needs are met. Sometimes a little thank you goes a long way.

I would like to thank our department

of human services and Safe Harbors who often see the worst during the holidays. They are also on call all of the time to help children and adults who need their help. Abuse is a horrible thing, thank you for being there and getting them the help they need.

I have to give a big thank you to the stores and restaurant owners and their clerks who work so hard during the holidays to make your shopping and eating a great experience. Their staff quite often see the worst in people, as we all tend to get impatient during this season. These folks are exhausted by the end of the holiday season, please be kind to them.

I would like to thank the many volunteers who do so much during the holidays. There are so many people to thank in this category so I will just say thank you. Your role as a volunteer is so very important, and I just want you to know you are appreciated.

If I have left anyone out, it was not intentional. Please be kind to others while out during the holidays. The services provided to you from all of these various public servants are quite often taken for granted.

Please take a moment when they come to your aid and say thank you, their family is home waiting for them to return while they are helping you during this busy holiday season.

Drive carefully, and be safe during the holidays, give thanks every day for the many things that you have and are provided.

*Michele Young is city administrator of the city of Enterprise.*

## 'Yes for libraries' needs you

Here's hoping all of our readers had a tremendous Thanksgiving Day and survived the turkey haze that followed.

You couldn't have asked for more beautiful weather. It was 65 degrees at our house early on Thursday morning and the sunshine was blinding. Rain fell later in the day, but it was still one of the most temperate Thanksgivings in some time.

In addition to our feast at home, we attended the community Thanksgiving dinner at the Enterprise Senior Center. It was heartwarming to watch the volunteers in action and visit with many of the 100 or so who came out for turkey and all the trimmings.

It was yet another tremendous example of the quality of life here in Wallowa County. Everyone who attended went home full of good cheer and great food. There is a feature page on the event elsewhere in this edition.

**IF YOU MISSED** the holiday bazaar in Joseph this past weekend, you're in luck. It will be repeated again this coming Friday and Saturday. The Joseph Community Center was packed to capacity with vendors and as we understand it, a waiting list of artisans who weren't able to get in. Time to expand to an additional venue, I would say.

Having spent some time both Friday and Saturday in Joseph, it appeared shopping crowds were large, and an informal "bag survey" showed many on the streets with parcels large and small.

Sometimes amidst all the strife and bickering coming out of Washington we



**WAHL TO WALL**

Paul Wahl

miss good news. The economy this year falls into that category. Nationally, the six leading economic indicators — everything from unemployment rates to the stock market — are trending upward this year.

Even the weather has been favorable for shopping and other outdoor pursuits thus far this winter.

Although the face of retail is changing somewhat, hometown shopping opportunities in businesses operated by folks you know — such as those in Joseph and Enterprise and across Wallowa County — can't be duplicated online. You've got three weeks to take in the fun.

**COMING UP** next Tuesday, Dec. 5, will be the next organizing meeting of the YES for Libraries Campaign Committee at Building Healthy Families in Enterprise. The evening begins with a light dinner, followed by breakout groups for each of the committees the group hopes to form.

The May ballot on which the proposal for forming a library district will be here before you know it. This is your opportunity to get involved in the campaign.

We have devoted barrels of ink to this cause, and I'll have to admit to being disappointed at the response. Like so many

worthwhile endeavors, the 80-20 rule applies — 20 percent do the work and too many coach from the sidelines.

If this campaign is going to be successful, it desperately needs the time, talent and voices of more than the dozen or so who have stepped forward to this point.

No one should be deluded into thinking that folks happily march the polls and vote to raise their taxes, even for the best of causes. If you're one of those who's thinking, "who would oppose funding for libraries," think again.

The goal of the "vote yes" committee is to reach every voter in the county with the story about why libraries are important and deserve your tax-dollar support. An oligarchy isn't what's needed to accomplish that goal, an all-out full-court press involving everyone is the commitment needed.

Follow the YES for Libraries Campaign Committee on Facebook.

Ask not what your libraries can do for you, but what you can do for your libraries, to paraphrase JFK.

Here's one I grew up hearing: If a task has been begun. Never leave it till it's done. Be the labor great or small. Do it well or not at all.

Having watched dozens of ballot initiatives come and go over 40 years in the newspaper business, I have deep concerns as to whether this one can be successful given the scant participation in the "vote Yes" movement thus far.

Let's work to pack the Building Healthy Families Building to capacity on Dec. 5.

## Foundation event was superb

Wallowa Valley Health Care Foundation put on its annual dinner auction Nov. 11 at the artfully decorated Cloverleaf Hall. It was a sold-out crowd.

The event was hugely successful. The citizens and businesses of Wallowa County once again — even though they are hit up multiple times each year — gave generously of their time and finances.

The goal was to raise funds for the

**LETTERS to the EDITOR**

new 3-D state-of-the-art mammography machine. To this end, more than \$113,000 was raised.

All of that money will stay here in our county. Our hospital, which is ranked as one of the most outstanding rural hospitals in the nation, is the beneficiary. Our

hospital has directly or indirectly positively benefited all of us. It deserves our support.

In a world where there is a pervasive aura of negativity, we can be proud to live where we care deeply about each other. And, we are willing to roll up our sleeves and commit to seeing that good things keep happening here at home.

**Gail Swart**  
*Enterprise*

**Letters to the Editor** are subject to editing and should be limited to 275 words. Writers should also include a phone number with their signature so we can call to verify identity. The Chieftain does not run anonymous letters.

In terms of content, writers should refrain from personal attacks. It's acceptable, however, to attack (or support) another party's ideas.

We do not routinely run thank-you letters, a policy we'll consider waiving only in unusual situations where reason compels the exception.

You can submit a letter to the Wallowa County Chieftain in person; by mail to P.O. Box 338, Enterprise, OR 97828; by email to editor@wallowa.com; or via the submission form at the newspaper's website, located at wallowa.com.

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