



Remember small businesses when shopping

November 22, 2011

It's that most wonderful time of the year. Thanksgiving is tomorrow and the Black Friday extravaganza is just two days away.

But there also is something else on the horizon that, while it doesn't get nearly the publicity of Black Friday or even Cyber Monday, is just as important to local shoppers and merchants alike.

It's Small Business Saturday, and people are being asked to make a pledge to "shop small" on that day.

"If millions of Americans shop small, it will be huge," according to American Express, a founding partner of the shop small movement.

Manitowoc County offers hundreds of retail options, from big box retailers to specialty grocery stores. They all are part of the economic mix and provide a variety of options for holiday shoppers.

Shopping habits have morphed to the point where smaller retailers can be forgotten in the hustle and bustle as people try to complete their holiday shopping in one- or two-stop fashion.

There is nothing wrong with that, but small business retailers ask that holiday shoppers not forget some of the unique items they have to offer.

There are restaurants, jewelry stores, hobby shops, gift stores, hotels, motels, banks, dental offices, auto shops, credit unions, liquor stores, boat sale facilities, cellular phone services, investment companies, coffee shops, medical clinics, bowling alleys, golf courses, antique shops, cleaning services, paint stores and many others among the small businesses in Manitowoc County.

And that's just a small sampling of what's available. Smaller retailers also enjoy the advantage of offering special services and know a great deal about the products on their shelves.

Shopping at smaller specialty stores is growing more popular. Privately held stores that sell electronics, appliances, office supplies, stationery and gifts had more sales growth than their publicly traded counterparts last year, according to data from financial information company Sageworks.

One small purchase can make a big difference, not only to your shopping habits but to local small businesses as well.

We urge you to keep small businesses in mind this holiday season. You may just be pleasantly surprised at what you'll find, and enjoy a less harried experience at the same time.

Give Small Business Saturday a try.

For the full story by Sageworks' analysis, please visit [Herald Times Reporter - Remember small businesses when shopping.](#)