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Section C

Small shops seek seasonal surge

Local businesses offer deals to compete with national chains.

By KAYLA LOKEINSKY
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Small Business Saturday is a day to help the little guys.

Many Lake City businesses are offering doorbuster deals on Black Friday and Small Business Saturday — Nov. 24 and 25 — encouraging residents to shop local rather than spend their money at big chain stores.

It's hard to compete with the flashy sales offered by corporate businesses, but many locally-owned stores are offering bargains to bring in customers on one of the biggest shopping days of the year. Many hope these sales will continue to bring in locals looking to support a Lake City-based business.

Morrell's Furniture & Mattresses started marking down prices with a two-day, pre-Black Friday sale this past Friday and Saturday, offering major discounts throughout the store with items up to 50 percent off. Their Black Friday sale always results in a large turnout according to Hunter Mabile, general manager

of Morrell's on Deputy J. Davis Lane in Lake City.

"It's ridiculous," Mabile said. "We have people waiting every Black Friday outside the doors before we open. It's the busiest day of the year."

Another local business anticipating a big Black Friday crowd is Chastain Jewelers. Located in the Lake City Mall, Chastain Jewelers is offering exclusive sales for the holiday, including buy-two-get-one free Pandora items and some surprise Black Friday deals.

Manager Linda Dowling encourages shoppers to buy jewelry from a locally-owned business.

"Supporting a small business that's been around for 20 years is really important to the community," Dowling said.

Dowling says many department or chain jewelry stores get the same cookie-cutter items that people can find anywhere. As the buyer for Chastain Jewelers she tries to make sure that every item is unique and

SHOPS continued on 6C



Southern Sisters Boutique & Embroidery owners Kayley Nobles (left) and Kristen Dasher pose in their shop in downtown Lake City. Their store is just one of the many small businesses offering Black Friday sales on Friday, Nov. 24. Southern Sisters Boutique & Embroidery will be offering sales throughout the entire day, including 15 percent off a total purchase from 9 to 11 a.m.

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Photos by KAYLA LOKEINSKY/Lake City Reporter

Morrell's Furniture & Mattresses is just one of the many locally-owned businesses in Lake City offering deals for Black Friday. One of their Black Friday specials is 20 percent off all dining sets.

SHOPS

Continued From 1C

high-quality. "You'll get a lot more variety here," Dowling said. While some local businesses have been dealing with the Black Friday crowds for years, others are just learning how to navigate the holiday as a small business.

Southern Sisters Boutique & Embroidery owner Kayley Nobles said the store was better able to anticipate the number of shoppers this year after experiencing the store's first Black Friday last year.

"Last year was our first Black Friday and we didn't really know what to expect," Nobles said. "We were really underprepared. When Black Friday was over we barely had anything left in the store."

Southern Sisters Boutique & Embroidery is offering 15 percent off a total purchase from 9 to 11 a.m. Friday, 10 percent off from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5 percent off from 2 to 5 p.m.

"This year we're much more prepared," Nobles said. "The earlier you come the better."

Shopping at a small business has more of a fiscal impact on the community than shopping at a chain or large business.

According to the American Independent Business Alliance, on average, 48 percent of each purchase at local, independent businesses is recirculated locally, compared to less than 14 percent of purchases at chain stores.

"The mom and pop businesses, the small businesses, are the ones that make a lasting impact on our community," Lake City-Columbia County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Dennille Decker said. "Everything we invest in them they invest back into the community."

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