



## **Shop locally-owned businesses first!**

As you decide where to shop for gifts for friends and family this holiday season, why should you consider purchasing gifts from locally-owned Ames small businesses and bypassing the big box stores?

**1. You will be supporting your local economy:** When you spend money with local business owners,

that money recirculates in Ames. Local business owners employ local workers, pay local taxes, give to local charities, and buy goods and services from other local businesses. Retail studies show of \$100 spent at a locally-owned business, \$68 remains in the local economy, compared to \$43 for every \$100 spent at a chain. For example, by supporting a local clothing boutique, a consumer is also supporting a local tax preparer and printer. Local businesses tend to source small manufacturing and banking needs closer to home as well.

- 2. You will receive better service, better value, and a more unique selection:** Chain store patrons typically cite prices and product variety when they opt for big-box stores. Internet shoppers do so for convenience but comparison shopping between independent businesses and chains is about "overall value, not just price. When you look at other factors, such as unique selection and durability, you might find the better value at a locally-owned business. But, perhaps more important than their inventory, locally-owned businesses keep alive that elusive remnant of the retail experience— personalized service.
- 3. You will be doing something good for the environment:** According to the Environmental Protection Agency, industrial pollution is responsible for almost 50 percent of the pollution present in the United States. Shopping locally helps cut down on processing, packaging and transportation waste, leading to less pollution.

This holiday season, please spread your cheer where it counts, at home. Convenience may dictate online shopping or the mall, but think about making the holidays brighter for your friends and neighbors. Money spent on Main Street stays within the Ames community and sustains those who need it most.

Times are tight and not everyone has money to give this season, but we can all choose where to do our holiday shopping. The dollars you spend have a real impact on the health of your city and by spending on Main Street you create jobs on Main Street. Local business owners have supported your hometown by choosing to operate in Ames; please support them this year when you do your holiday shopping and spend with those you know.

Happy Holidays from the Ames Main Street Cultural District!

