

Shop Small on November 26

It's been said that good things come in small packages, and perhaps the same could be said about small businesses.

The Aiken Chamber of Commerce, the North Augusta Chamber of Commerce, and the Aiken Downtown Development Association want everyone to shop small – small business, that is – and see what good things they can find this holiday season.

The three organizations have teamed up to promote “Small Business Saturday,” a nationwide initiative to encourage shoppers to shop at local, independently-owned merchants the Saturday after Thanksgiving, November 26.

“Local businesses create jobs, boost the economy and build strong communities and neighborhoods,” said Aiken Downtown Development Association Executive Director, Carla Cloud. “These businesses have invested in our community, and we should, in return, invest in them.”

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, there were nearly 28 million small businesses in the United States last year. Over the past two decades, they have generated 65 percent of net new jobs.

Their importance to local communities extends even further. The impact that “shopping small” has on local communities is profound: for every \$100 spent at a locally owned small business, \$68 returns to the community through taxes, payroll and other expenditures, according to *Civic Economics*.

“Take a break in between Black Friday and Cyber Monday and spend your money on Small Business Saturday. You're sure to find some local bargains by shopping Aiken, and you'll also be giving a great gift back to your community,” said Cloud. “When you spend your money with locally owned businesses, you're helping to ensure the success of Aiken. You're supporting the people who touch your life in so many ways: your Sunday school teacher, little league coach, your friend, your neighbor,” she said.

Business owners can also help spread the word by visiting www.facebook.com/smallbusinesssaturday to download online promotional materials that will help drive sales to their businesses on Small Business Saturday.

Small Business Saturday was launched last year as a nationwide event to drive shoppers to local, independently-owned merchants. The initiative was created by American Express in response to small business owners' most pressing need of creating more demand for their products and services.

Visit www.smallbusinesssaturday.com for more details.