

# Last minute rush is on at local stores

By ZAC BELLMAN Staff writer | Posted: Wednesday, December 21, 2016 4:00 pm

BELOIT — Stores are flooding with last minute shoppers looking for the perfect stocking stuffer.

Beloit Shopko Manager Ben Broge said every Friday and Saturday from Black Friday through Christmas have remained their busiest times. The hottest items have included drones and other electronics, as well as the retro Nintendo Entertainment System and Hatchimals, which have proven to be the most sought-after Christmas toy of the year.

"We had a limited number of the Hatchimals, and ran out in two seconds," Broge said. "Same with the retro Nintendo. We had a limited supply of those as well."

Shopko will be open from 8 a.m. to midnight through Dec. 23 for last-minute shoppers, and 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Christmas Eve.

Blain's Farm & Fleet in Rockton also briefly had some Hatchimals in stock, but those quickly flew off the shelves. Other products have been popular as well as the weather has taken a late seasonal turn for the frigid in recent weeks.

"All of our cold weather stuff, hats, coats, gloves have been selling well," said Store Manager Daniel Bierbrodt. "A lot of our heated products, as well as our toy section have been busy as well."

Blain's Farm & Fleet will be open from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. through Dec. 23, and 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve.

Elder-Beerman in Beloit has seen a similar influx of shoppers in the past couple weeks, particularly later in the week, according to Hannah Brogan of the Human Resources Department. At Elder-Beerman, the hottest items have been in the home goods realm of gifts.

"The whole home department, in general, compared to anywhere else in the store has been doing well lately," Brogan said.

Elder-Beerman will be open from 7 a.m. to midnight during the week through Dec. 23, and 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Christmas Eve.

For those looking for a sweet treat, The Flying Pig will be open from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. through Friday. Owner Lisa Dodd said her business has received an influx of orders on their website in recent weeks.



## Stocking stuffers

Melissa Bach, owner of Upperclass Awards, Apparel & Gifts, shows off a variety of custom designs available for last-minute shoppers. Her store will be open from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. through Friday for those looking for a stocking stuffer.

"We have had a lot of orders on our website, where we are offering 15 percent off on all orders," Dodd said. "We have also sold a lot of gift cards."

Another downtown business that has benefited from the gift-giving season is Upperclass Awards, Apparel & Gifts. Owner Melissa Bach said Christmas T-shirts, engraved candles, glitter shirts and engraved mugs have all been among their best sellers. Bach also said the store should be able to handle most orders made by Thursday in time for Christmas.

"We have plenty of shirts in stock, so if we have your size we should be able to complete your order," Bach said.