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FEATURED

Businesses hope for big retail weekend

By HILLARY GAVAN Senior staff writer
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Nikkie Chadwick, owner of Walnut Creek Apparel and Gifts, stands by some of the items for sale in her downtown Beloit shop. She, like many other small businesses, are hoping customers will think of her when shopping this holiday season.

Clint Wolf/Beloit Daily News

With Black Friday and Small Business Saturday this weekend, local retailers are gearing up with sales, unique ways to shop safely and lots of fun.



Many small businesses in the area are offering unique merchandise and give-aways to lure customers into stores for safe, in-person holiday shopping experiences with the hope that many will not just opt for online shopping this year.

Best of Beloit Vintage Mall, 1019 Gardner St., South Beloit has its “Bucks and Does” weekend running Friday through Sunday where shoppers can visit the mall’s 143 businesses and small vendors, according to store manager Leighia Halvorsen.



“Within that, many booths are giving 15% off. There will be a hot cocoa station, and a \$100 gift card giveaway for those who make a purchase or bring in an unused toy. The donations are going to Rock House Kids,” Halvorsen said.

On Small Business Saturday, the first 10 customers will get goody bags. There will be live jazz music from 11 a.m.—2 p.m. by LaShel Levy and from 11 a.m.—3 p.m. there will be Lola’s Lucky Day Dog Rescue with two pups on site. There will be cookies and chocolate covered pretzels for purchase. Hours for Best of Beloit Vintage Mall are 10 a.m.—5 p.m. daily.

Walnut Creek Apparel and Gifts, 406 E. Grand Ave., Beloit, is offering online orders through its website, which can be picked up in-store, curbside or via shipment to one’s home. Walnut Creek offers personalized gifts, customized printed apparel and other gifts including jewelry and kitchen items.

Owner Nikkie Chadwick said customers can call the store to set up private shopping times outside of normal business hours so they can come into the store in a less populous environment.

In addition to lots of safety accommodations, there will be lots of deals. From now until Christmas, she said there will be a gift card program where shoppers can buy a \$25 gift card for \$20 dollars; a \$50 card for \$40; and a \$100 gift card for \$80.

Chadwick said she, like many other business owners, is doing whatever she can to keep business going during the pandemic.

“Most people in retail know their numbers will be down, but I still really hope with Beloit’s push to shop local, we will still be OK and at the end of the year we will look back and have had a decent season,” Chadwick said.

For the holiday season Walnut Creek will be open 9 a.m.—6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and Saturday 10 a.m.—2 p.m. For Black Friday and Small Business Saturday Walnut Creek will be open from 9 a.m.—8 p.m.

Chadwick said she and other downtown businesses have been collaborating and hope to do a special shopping Sunday event the last Sunday before Christmas as well.

At Pizzazz Gift & Apparel Boutique, 313 State St., owner Christine Drake said the store will offer a 3-day sale on Black Friday and Small Business Saturday as well as on the first Sunday the store will be open for the season. From now until Christmas, the shop will be open seven days a week.

Drake is also taking appointments for private shopping from 3-5 p.m. on Saturday if people call ahead or email the store. Pizzazz offers local delivery and curbside pickup.

Specials starting Black Friday will be 25 percent off of holiday decor. With every purchase, customers will get a discount or a free gift.

“We are also giving away \$25 gift certificates so there are entry forms for that. With every \$100 purchase, customers get a free gift as well,” she said.

On Sunday the staff will be doing a Facebook live sale at 3 p.m. where people will watch a show and purchase items shown by commenting.

Drake encourages everyone to remember small business which has taken the biggest hit during the pandemic. She said local businesses are putting money back into the economy and contribute donations for a variety of needs.

At Nine Bells & Cat Tails, 421 E. Grand Ave., owner Karen Koyama will be offering the chance to win a crystal bracelet and tarot reading.

“People can enter their name into a drawing on Friday and Saturday. At the end of Saturday we will draw two winners,” Koyama said.

Her shop, which offers metaphysical and natural items including candles, incense, herbs and tools for healing and alternative spiritual practices, will be open on Friday and Saturday with sales for holiday-related items. Some new merchandise is arriving Thursday for placement on Friday including spell bottles for health, happiness and prosperity and blessing balls. Koyama has already had several holiday shoppers and her stained glass items have been a big hit.

At Harris Ace Hardware, 430 Broad St., Store Manager Gordon Crane said sales have already been underway for a few days. The store offers curbside pickup, online shopping or free delivery for a purchase over \$50.

“We have a few regulars doing curbside pickup and I make two to three deliveries a week,” Crane said.



He said business is starting to pick up again and the store is ready for a busy weekend.

The Downtown Beloit Association (DBA) is running a contest until Nov. 23 in conjunction with Small Business Saturday (Nov. 28) to give away a total of eight \$250 gift cards to be used to shop downtown businesses. For all of the giveaways, people can go on the DBA website at downtownbeloit.com to find a link to enter to win. Winners can use their cards to shop Small Business Saturday.

DBA Promotions Coordinator Crystal Cribbs said many businesses in the downtown will be showing off their Small Business Saturday swag and offering deals. She encourages people to support all local businesses, especially during the pandemic. She said if everyone in the city shopped at a retail store or got food once a month locally it could make a substantial difference.

Holidazzle will be held 5-9 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 4. With no trolley or food allowed this year, the focus will be on shopping the businesses.

Hillary Gavan