# Stay local when shopping this holiday season

Holiday shoppers have no shortage of retailers competing for their dollars come December. The National Retail Federation estimated 2025 holiday spending exceeded $1 trillion, and there's little reason to suspect 2026 spending will not match or exceed that amount.

With so much money being spent, retailers have much to gain from attracting holiday shoppers. While big box stores and online retailers may beckon shoppers louder than anyone this December, there's plenty of reasons to look local when buying gifts for loved ones during the holiday season.

• Buying local pays you back. Communities benefit when shoppers spend their money at locally owned businesses. According to the Local Business Institute, $48 of every $100 spent at a locally owned business ultimately recirculates in the community. That means supporting one business in your community indirectly leads to supporting others. And residents should know that a thriving local business sector is great for property values, as buyers tend to be willing to pay more to live in locations with successful shops, cafes and restaurants.

• Buying local encourages additional investment. New Jersey-based Spencer Savings Bank notes the appeal of already thriving business sectors on other entrepreneurs seeking to open their businesses. By supporting existing local businesses now, residents are helping to establish a foundation for future economic growth within their communities. The holiday season is a particularly lucrative time for businesses of all sizes, so that makes it a perfect time for locals to support the establishments in their community.

• Buying local offers more chances to find something unique. Buying local also pays more immediate dividends come the holiday season. Big box stores and online retailers sell the same items to people regardless of where they live, whereas independently owned local businesses tend to feature more unique items that can only be found in their stores. Shoppers looking for unique gifts for their loved ones need look no further than Main Street to find such items.

• Buying local benefits the environment. Eco-conscious holiday shoppers should know that buying local is often beneficial for the environment. Locally crafted and purchased items will not require as much packaging as items purchased from big box stores or online retailers that must protect products from the wear and tear of long distance travel. And that travel also has a negative impact on the environment, as the longer distance it takes to get a product from a warehouse to a consumer's home, the more harmful the transaction typically is on the environment.

The holiday season is a lucrative time of year for retailers, and there are numerous reasons why shoppers should focus their buying power on local businesses this year and in the years to come.

# Hodgenville, New Haven receive TAP funding

Gov. Andy Beshear recently announced more than $18.8 million in grant funding for 18 transportation projects across the commonwealth that will improve safety and accessibility for Kentuckians, including for LaRue County. From walking to biking, wheelchairs and more, Team Kentucky is committed to making our commonwealth more accessible for everyone.

The funding is from the federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), which reimburses local governments for 80% of the costs of non-motorized transportation projects that focus on bicycle and pedestrian pathways, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act, the Safe Routes to School program, and safety enhancements for vulnerable roadway users.

The funding includes 18 projects in the cities of Auburn, Beattyville, Benton, Brooksville, Columbia, Elkton, Hodgenville, Jackson, Jenkins, Lexington, Morgantown, Mortons Gap, New Haven, Paintsville and Prestonsburg, and in Bath, Kenton and Robertson counties.

Hodgenville will use its allocated $80,000 for pedestrian improvements around the outside of Lincoln Square, while New Haven will use its $80,000 for a Main Street Sidewalk Design.

"Transportation isn't just about the work we are doing to improve roads and bridges across our state; it's about creating communities that support every Kentuckian and their needs," said Gov. Beshear. "These projects will help give peace of mind to parents knowing their kids can walk safely to school, while improving access to local businesses and more."

# GUTHRIE

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Guthrie also discussed rising fuel costs, particularly diesel prices, which affect farmers preparing for harvest and consumers paying for transported goods.

"Everything that shows up at a store comes on a truck," he said.

He attributed some of the pressure on diesel supplies to disruptions in Russian exports amid the war in Ukraine. He said efforts to increase supplies could help address the immediate issue but argued the country also needs to expand its domestic refining capacity.

"We haven't built a new refinery in the United States since the 1970s," he said, noting that existing facilities have been improved over the years.

Guthrie said he wants the House Energy and Commerce Committee to examine ways to increase refining capacity, pointing to the continued importance of gasoline and diesel to the nation's economy.

Rural health care was another topic during the interview, with Guthrie addressing concerns about how federal legislation could affect Kentucky hospitals. He disputed Gov. Andy Beshear's warning that 35 Kentucky hospitals would close as a result of the legislation, stating that he has visited every hospital in his congressional district included on the list and that none were closing.

"Not a single one is closing," he said. "Matter of fact, most are expanding."

Guthrie said Congress established a fund intended to support rural hospitals and health care services. However, he acknowledged concerns about how Kentucky is distributing the funding, explaining that the state has authority over how the money is administered within federal requirements.

The interview also covered federal budget negotiations. Guthrie identified Dec. 11 as a key deadline for funding legislation, saying lawmakers hoped to avoid another government shutdown and allow more time to review spending bills before the end of the year. He said Congress wanted to avoid last-minute negotiations that have previously pushed funding decisions close to Christmas, when lawmakers are trying to return home for the holidays.

As Congress continues to address energy demands, health care funding and federal spending, the decisions made in Washington will have lasting implications for communities across Kentucky, including LaRue County.

# AWARDS

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Slinker addressed the attendees and praised their efforts to save lives in their communities.

"It takes a team to keep our roads safe and these officers and child passenger safety professionals are doing their part to make a real difference by protecting our loved ones," said Slinker.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), seat belts, when worn correctly, are proven to reduce the risk of fatal injuries to front-seat occupants by 45% and by 60% in pickup trucks, SUVs and minivans. Also, according to NHTSA, properly installed child restraints reduce the risk of fatal injuries by 71% for infants and by 54% for toddlers in passenger cars. In light trucks, SUVs and minivans, properly deployed child restraints reduce the risk of fatal injuries by 58% for infants and 59% for toddlers.

In Kentucky, 88.5% of drivers and passengers buckle up. Annually, nearly half of all highway fatalities involving a vehicle reported unbelted occupants.

The following local law enforcement officers received 2026 safety awards:

Hodgenville Police Lt. (now Chief) Terry Riley

LaRue County Sheriff Deputy Cory Skaggs

# REMOVAL

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Non-permitted signs can create additional hazards by blocking sight distance or distracting drivers, particularly at intersections. The state is also in the final mowing cycle of the year, and signs can impede progress and become hazardous to mowing crews and passing motorists, the release said.

"Anyone wanting to place such signage must do so beyond roadway right-of-way limits. Along routes with a right-of-way fence, the fence is included with the restriction and no signage may be attached. In addition to signs, right-of-way restrictions also apply to yard sales and peddling activities and associated parking."

It is also illegal to attach signs or items such as flyers, posters, balloons or streamers to stop signs, highway markers or any other road sign or utility pole. Illegal placement on utility poles presents additional obstacles and potential dangers for utility crew workers.

Removed items will be taken to each county's KYTC maintenance facility and held for a short period of time. Unclaimed materials will be trashed or recycled.

If you have questions related to legal/illegal sign placement, contact the Permits Section at KYTC District 4 in Elizabethtown by calling 270-766-5066.

# TRAIL

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Oct. 17: Registration deadline is October 17, while displays needed to be completed by Oct. 18. Starting the next day, the community is welcomed to drive the trail and vote for their favorites.

To participate you need to send your completed display photo to Abby Lee at 270-991-6622 by Oct. 18.

Let's make this a new LaRue County fall tradition!


Hinton
For LaRue County
School Board District 5

Working to make
LaRue County better -
today and for the future



**Wife - Mother**

- Married to Jeremy Hinton for 24 years
- Mother to Jacob (LCHS & UK Graduate), Joslyn (LCHS Graduate & current UK Student), and Joel (8th Grader at LCMS)
- Bachelor's Degree in History from the University of Kentucky



**Farmer - Businesswoman - Employer - Taxpayer**

- Co-owner Hinton's Orchard & Farm Market for over 20 Years
- Daily decision maker for business
- Given over 80 students their first job
- Dependable, Thoughtful, & Analytical

**Involved Community Leader - Experienced Decision Maker**

- Dist 5 Rep on School Board - 14 years
  - Chair 3 terms, Vice Chair 3 terms
  - Over 120 Hours Continuing Education in School Board Operations
- LaRue County Band Boosters
  - Fund Raising Chair & Bingo Coordinator
- Kentucky Center for Agriculture & Rural Development
  - Current Board Chair
- Kentucky State Horticulture Society
  - State Board Member



Paid for by Joanna Hinton



CLOSER Purpose SHOP

WOMEN & MEN'S CLOTHING,
DECOR, GIFTS & MORE

48 LINCOLN SQUARE
DOWNTOWN Hodgenville

FOLLOW US ON:
FACEBOOK-INSTAGRAM-TIKTOK

BRING THIS IN:
GET 10% OFF

FOR IN-STORE USE ONLY
EXPIRES 12-31-26

TUESDAY THRU FRIDAY: 11 TO 6:00PM
SATURDAY: 10 TO 4:00PM

owners: Beth & Jeremy Williams



Widows' Walk

Upcoming Opportunities

OCTOBER

15 | Widow's Walk Parkway | 11 am

NOVEMBER

3 | Keep Stepping Forward | 10 am | LaRue Co. Public Library

10 | Widows' Walk • Parkway | 7 pm

13 | Widow's Walk • Parkway | 7 pm

14 | Hope for the Holiday Event | 9 am – 12 pm

19 | Widow's Walk • Parkway | 11 am