

Celebrating the best of Carroll and Trimble

And the winners are ...

Readers of the Carrollton News-Democrate and Trimble Banner have selected their favorite local businesses and more in our inaugural Best of Carroll & Trimble readership survey, the voting for which took place from Sept. 25-Oct. 5.

Thousands of votes were cast ranging from who serves the best cup of coffee, cheeseburgers, ice cream, pizza and more; the best local event; and their favorite coaches and teachers from each county.

Congratulations to the winner and finalists! You represent the BEST of our communities and should be proud of this honor.

We'd like to thank you everyone who voted and shared the ballot with others. We love to see all the people and local businesses supported in this annual contest. There were many nominated that may not have made the top three but are still important to our community and listed among the favorites of many. We are truly fortunate to have such a strong local business community and deserving individuals.

Voting for the 2027 Best of Carroll & Trimble awards will take place in September 2027. Have a category you would like to see on the ballot? Send it our way at advertising@madisoncourier.com.



BEST OF THE BEST 2026

BEST AUCTION SERVICE

Winner: Red Truck Auction Company
Finalist: News Auction
Finalist: NXS Auctions

BEST CHURCH

Winner: Family Worship Center
Finalist: First Baptist
Finalist: Bedford Baptist Church

BEST AUTO DEALER

Winner: Marshall Chevrolet
Finalist: Milton Auto Sales
Finalist: Millers Auto Sales

BEST AUTO MAINTENANCE & REPAIR

Winner: Leatherman's Garage
Finalist: Edens Auto Repair and Towing
Finalist: Lawson's Garage

BEST BANK

Winner: First National Bank of Kentucky
Finalist: The Farmers Bank of Milton
Finalist: Bedford Bank

BEST CHEESEBURGER

Winner: Jacob's Rubbin' Butts BBQ
Finalist: Cooper's Restaurant
Finalist: Little Town & Country Restaurant

BEST CHIROPRACTIC

Winner: Langston Chiropractic
Finalist: Carroll County Chiropractic and Rehabilitation

BEST CLOTHING BOUTIQUE

Winner: Beauty From Ashes
Finalist: The Lemon Drop Boutique

BEST CONVENIENCE STORE

Winner: Casey's
Finalist: Bedford Stop & Go
Finalist: Valero Foodmart

BEST CARROLL COUNTY TEACHER

Winner: Kim New
Finalist: Jessica Noble
Finalist: Amy Alsup

The reasons to 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.