



Beat the Rush – Buy Local!

by Jordan Havlin Swartz

When you think of holiday shopping, what comes to mind? Long lines. Cranky shoppers. Bad holiday music. Tired feet. All together a stressful event.

Now consider this – Small shops. Friendly clerks. Unique items. Small lines. You may be thinking to yourself “this does not sound like my holiday shopping season, how can this be true?” But it could be very true if you choose to buy local this holiday season.

Here is the what, where and why of buying local this year:

1. What shops should I go to, and where are they?

There are many local shops with unique items at reasonable prices waiting to serve you this holiday season. Flyers with extensive lists of local shops and locations will be located on the Entertainment News NW website: www.ennw.info, in various local publications as well as many local shops. November 29 through December 5 is the eighth annual Buy Local Week. As you are walking around your favorite shopping district, keep an eye out for the decals and posters in shop front windows signifying their support of Buy Local Week.

2. I like to save money. Are there discounts available?

Many discounts will be located in the buying guides and flyers distributed throughout Whatcom County. If you are a bargain hunter and don't mind the challenge of bidding on items check out the 3rd annual Bid Local First on-line auction running from November 22 through December 5. Hundreds of items, getaways and events are listed to bid on making it super easy to find the perfect gift for friends and family right from the comfort of your home. Some of last year's top selling items included a round trip Victoria dinner cruise, a green day at The Loft Salon & Spa, and flawlessly clean carpets. With so many unique and exciting items to choose from, you will be everyone's favorite giver this year without breaking the bank. The 2011 “Where the Locals Go” coupon books are available in local stores to help you save on your holiday shopping or to give as a gift. The discounts range from dining out, yoga and massage to home improvement.

3. Why should I shop local?

Not only will you be saving yourself a headache, you will be stimulating the local economy of the city you love! Sustainable



Connections is challenging the Bellingham community to change 10% of their shopping to local this holiday season. That's a mere \$50 of the \$500 you may spend on gifts going toward local businesses. Michelle Grandy, Communications and Think Local First Manager of Sustainable Connections says, “We're encouraging folks to support friends and neighbors by keeping their money local, whether that means purchasing more locally grown food for their holiday meals, visiting a local holiday craft festival or unique store right here in Whatcom County, or finding a one-of-a-kind experience to share with loved ones.” By keeping the money you spend local, you in turn circulate the money at home leading to a more stable local economy. Stability leads to more local jobs and production.

For details of the Bid Local First Auction, Buy Local Week and other sustainable community information visit sustainableconnections.org.

Jordan Havlin Swartz is an English Literature Major at Western Washington University planning to become a Secondary Education teacher. Her hobbies and interests include Argentine tango, theatre, yoga and inspiring a hunger for knowledge and experience.

FEATURED EXHIBIT
through
July 3, 2011

The Way We Played

Early Skagit Recreation



- Great photos
- Entertaining tales
- Engaging artifacts

SAVE THE DATE
SATURDAY, JANUARY 22
Noon to 4PM

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Featuring performance by Lummi Tribal Member Swil Kanim, Violin Virtuoso and Story Teller. Native Indian and Native-inspired artists will be demonstrating and selling their work.

Skagit County
Historical Museum

501 S. 4th St. La Conner
at the top of the hill
Open Tues-Sun 11-5
360.465.3365
www.skagitcounty.net/museum