

Have You Heard About The 3/50 Project?

Chris Dilla, owner of Bocktown Beer and Grill in North Fayette, does it. So does Michelle Mason, owner of LaStone Therapy, also in North Fayette. So, too, does Donna Dobos, owner of Willow Creek Crossing in the heart of downtown Oakdale. Add to that list RWG Archery and The Painted Giraffe, both in Imperial. Oh, and don't forget The Flowersmith in Kennedy and the Village Shoppe in Moon. Even local stores The Happy Baby Company, West Hills Pet Center and Northern Light Company, also all local businesses, are doing it.

What do they do? They are all locally owned, independent, small business owners who support and promote The 3/50 Project, a growing national movement to encourage local residents to make educated decisions about their dollars when they go out to spend. In a nutshell, it is about frequenting three local businesses each month and spreading one's \$50 in discretionary spending among them. Do it each month, and small business will stay alive and well here in the airport suburbs.

Donna Dobos passes out the flyer provided on The 3/50 Project Web site to her customers. Chris Dilla shares the flyer and also has a blog online about the importance of spending local and doing business with local people.

In an age when online shopping is becoming more and more popular and as more people short on time find it easier to order from the computer, it is important to point out that by doing one's shopping in this way, none of the money stays in the local neighborhood. Yet, by stopping at the local gift shop or hardware store to buy that special item, local people can keep local business alive.

Everyone has \$50 a month to spend. We spend it on everything from food and drinks to health and wellness products. With the national economy at a near standstill, it is more important than ever to support the hundreds of small businesses that work so hard to keep their storefronts alive.

Cinda Baxter, creator of The 3/50 Project, is a veteran consultant and one-time retailer who has launched a national effort to promote regional economies. She provides the collateral materials online for a nominal cost or even no-cost, so that small businesses can get the message out among their neighborhoods that it is important to buy local.

Says Chris Dilla, owner of Bocktown, "I learned of The 3/50 Project from Kim of McGinnis Sisters, who insisted that I 'google' it. I did the very next day, because the message already made sense to me. Bocktown needed to be involved."

"I was already saying the same thing

as Cinda Baxter in my own way. Bocktown has Pittsburgh Pride Partners whom we do business with to bring the best quality ingredients to our menu," she added.

"I want the area's shoppers to find us, and other locally owned businesses in the area. We need them. We want them, and we can offer a better and unique experience. I firmly believe you will get more quality and satisfaction when doing business within your community with your neighbors," Chris stressed.

And thus, the reason for The 3/50 Project. More details are outlined on the materials below.

As you begin your holiday shopping this season, be sure to take a look at the promotions being offered by our local businesses that are shared on the following pages. Stop in. Buy something. Thank them for being part of your community. Help them stay there.

(This story reprinted from the November 2010 issues of Allegheny West Magazine. Please feel free to replicate.)



Save your local economy...three stores at a time.

the 3/50 project

SAVING THE BRICK AND MORTARS OUR NATION IS BUILT ON

3 Think about which three independently owned stores you'd miss most if they were gone. Stop in, say hello, and pick a little something up. That's how they stay around.

50 If just half the employed U.S. population spent \$50 each month in independently owned stores, their purchases would generate \$42,629,700,000 in revenue.*

68 For every \$100 spent in independently owned stores, \$68 returns to the community through taxes, payroll, and other expenditures. In a national chain, only \$43 stays here. Spend it online and *nothing comes home*.

1 The number of people it takes to start the trend...you.

Pick 3. Spend 50. Save your local economy.

For more information, visit the350project.net

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* Employment statistics courtesy U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2/6/2009; 68/43 courtesy Civic Economics study, 2008.