

# The Importance of Shopping Locally

*Greene County Economic Development Groups*

How many times have you gotten into your vehicle and driven 20 or 30 miles to go shopping? You know the routine of, "Let's run to Jacksonville, or Jerseyville, or Alton." We all have, because of the "increased" selection of goods and services that might be greater and, "It's worth the trip." Sadly, only one in six adults purchase locally available goods and services.

Not only is it fairly easy to travel to these "commutable" places to get the things we need, on-line shopping has made it possible that we do not even have to leave our homes. We all get it; but, consider how you might be making Greene County, and your town a much better place if you make the decision to buy locally, and support our local businesses, whenever possible.

Here are some benefits to shopping locally:

- You support yourself by supporting your local businesses. There is increased positive economic impact. The dollars stay local and get recirculated by others who buy local goods and services. It adds to the tax base so that you have access to better schools, better roads and other public services. Consider that only about six cents of every dollar spent in a "big box" store stays in that local community as compared to sixty cents being retained or circulated by a local retailer!
- You actually support local groups. Did you know that local non-profits receive about 250% more support from local businesses than they do from the so-called "national" operations? The next time you are watching the kids play ball, note whose name is on the back of their shirts? Who is listed in the high school yearbook? What businesses are listed on the back of the church bulletins?
- You help to keep your community unique. You make your community home. The "one-of-a kind" businesses that develop from your local spending makes your town develop its own distinct personality. Your town can become a destination for others outside the community. As Richard

Moe, President, National Historic Preservation Trust says, "When people go on vacation they generally seek out destinations that offer them the sense of being someplace, not just anyplace."

- You help to create more jobs. Let's face it, small businesses are the job creators. Lend them your support.
- You get better service. You know your local merchants and they know you.
- You enhance investment in the community. Those local businesses that you support, take those dollars and reinvest them where you live, not some other state, or, even some other country.
- You facilitate local decision making by having those who own businesses in the community offering direction for the community.
- A vibrant community promotes an entrepreneurial community that provides a better livelihood for those who live in the community.

The reasons for shopping local are many more than what was just listed. Think about a couple of businesses that you'd hate to see gone in your town, or Greene County. Stop in and see them. Spend a few dollars while you are there. The next time you get into the car to go shopping, just ask yourself, "Do I really have to leave town to get what I want?"