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SPECIAL SERIES: BUY LOCAL, BUY BUTLER

## Small businesses 'are your neighbors'

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By Chelsey Levingston

Staff Writer

**FAIRFIELD** — For almost 18 years, Fairfield Framing Gallery has been decorating local walls by putting the finishing touches on customers' memorable photos, displaying their most prized keepsakes or showcasing art.

Fairfield Framing Gallery, located at 5146 Pleasant Ave. in Fairfield, is a full-service custom framing shop, said owner Kathy Carpe. Products and services include custom mirrors, shadowboxes, sports memorabilia, needlework framing, photo restoration, giftware and corporate framing.

"We'll frame pieces that you bring to us, as well as art that we can sell to you," Carpe said. "We work with our customers to achieve the look that best fits their taste."

The holiday season is this small business' busiest time of year, with customers ordering frames or shadowboxes for keepsakes, old family photos, and vacation mementos, among other things, she said. Shadowboxes are a popular item, and the frames provide depth to showcase images paired with trip souvenirs, for example, or other objects that customers want to display.

On Small Business Saturday, Nov. 29, consumers across the country are encouraged to do some of their holiday shopping on the Saturday after Thanksgiving at their neighborhood stores such as Fairfield Framing. The national "shop local" movement started in 2010.

Carpe said small business owners like herself have a lot of pride for what they do.

"Shopping local is good for the community as well as the shop owners for many reasons. One is if you do not have shops in the community, a lot of your services are going to be lost too," she said. "They'll move to other areas like your banks, your restaurants, your hairdressers, lots of other things."

"Locally, you get better customer service. These are your neighbors or people that live close by. You get to know people, it becomes more personal," she said.

Estimates are that for every dollar spent at a locally-owned small business, 45 cents stays in the community paid via local government taxes, wages or other spending. By comparison, companies owned by out-of-state corporations spend an estimated 15 cents in the local community.

At the end of October, Fairfield city government launched a new campaign to encourage residents to shop local stores not just this weekend, during Small Business Saturday, but throughout the year.

In a world in which national chains mean consumers can shop the same stores and restaurants in most places, small businesses offer something unique, said Greg Kathman, economic development manager for the city of Fairfield.

"There's something about local distinctive character that makes communities unique. Fairfield has some local unique businesses that makes it different from somewhere else," Kathman said.

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### FAIRFIELD FRAMING GALLERY

**What:** Full-service custom framing shop

**Where:** 5146 Pleasant Ave., Fairfield

**Phone:** 513-868-8050

**Owner:** Kathy Carpe

**Website:** [www.fairfieldframing.com](http://www.fairfieldframing.com)

**Employees:** Two, including Carpe

**Hours:** 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays, and closed Sundays and Mondays. After-hour appointments are available.

### BUY LOCAL, BUY BUTLER

See videos of small business owners from throughout Butler County, and read more about local industry online only at [www.journal-news.com](http://www.journal-news.com) as part of this special series.

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