

READER'S CHOICE



BEST of 2022

Presented by The McKenzie Banner



The Results

SPECIAL EDITION

TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2023



BANNER Presented by The McKenzie Banner



The people have voted, the results are in and now it's time to spread the word!

Welcome back to the "Best of" contest series! This contest was halted during the pandemic and we are excited to resume honoring "the best" in the community.

Though it's been a few years, you were ready when

we called on you to vote for your favorites! Thank you for the amazing response!

In this special edition we honor the Winners and Finalists in the Best of 2022 contest.

Thank you to all who voted in this contest.

It is important to honor local people and businesses because they are the lifeblood of the community.

We encourage you to visit the local merchants listed in this edition and congratulate them on their win.

late them on their win.

By shopping local, your money stays in the community and helps local schools and other government services.

Your support makes the impossible possible. Never underestimate the power of your voice.

If you have any questions regarding this contest or merchandise, please contact Desirae at 731-352-3323 or email SALES@mckenzie-banner.com.

SHOPPING LOCAL ONLINE Small Businesses Have Adapted To Meet One Key Consumer Demand

Convenience might be the first word to come to mind if consumers are asked why they rely so heavily on big-box retailers. Such retailers can offer a variety of products their smaller counterparts may not be able to match, and subsequently deliver those products with a speed that the average mom-and-pop operation cannot possibly keep up with. But the tide in regard to online buying is shifting, as surveys show a growing satisfaction with small business' online offerings. A 2021 survey commissioned by the digital marketing platform Sendinblue found that 58 percent of consumers in the United States prefer the online shopping experience with small businesses over their larger counterparts due to the former's ability to provide a more personalized and customized online shopping experience. In addition, 53 percent of consumers surveyed indicated they preferred online shopping with small businesses because they felt they received superior customer service with these firms when compared to larger online retailers.

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A3563



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A29

BOBBY GEE'S DINER

Delicious Meals, Friendly Service

BY KAREN FORESTER features@mckenziebanner.com

Bobby Gee's Diner has been providing Southern-inspired comfort food at reasonable prices for over a decade in McKenzie and the surrounding area. The diner first opened in what was once the old Polar Bar on Highland Avenue. After dishing up delicious meals with friendly service for five years, the owners, Bobby and Cindy Gaylord, decided to move to their current location at 131 South Main Street in 2017.

The Gaylords wanted to create a place that would offer a wide variety of food choices for their customers. They decided on a 1950s and 1960s theme because that is what Cindy's parents, Robert and Faye Warren, wanted. The name-sake of the diner is Bobby himself. His mother, Rosemary, called him Bobby Gee because there were so

many Bobbys in the family.

Quality service, excellent food and affordable prices have been hallmarks of Bobby Gee's Diner as proven once again in The McKenzie Banner's Best of 2022 contest. Readers were asked to submit their favorite business in each of 84 different categories and when the results were tallied, Bobby Gee's won Best Breakfast, Best Burger/Sandwich, Best Waiter/Waitress and placed as a finalist in Best Coffee.

"Every day we hand-pat our burgers using ground chuck which is the secret to a really good hamburger," said Cindy. "We don't use pre-formed, frozen patties and I know our customers can tell the difference."

Waitresses Bridget McMullin and Julia Towne were recognized by readers as the best in 2022 and that is no surprise to Cindy. "Julia is our daughter so the restaurant



business comes naturally to her and Bridget has been with us five years," she said. "My first job at age 17 was as a waitress, so I understand the importance of providing good service. I can be



strict on my servers." Recently though, a new waitress remarked, "After working my first full day, I really like Cindy, she's strict, but loving at the same time."

The breakfasts served at Bobby Gee's begin at 5 a.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. "A few of our regulars are fed and out the door by 5:30 a.m. even though we don't officially open until 6 a.m.," said Cindy. Serving breakfast all day is a popular option even though it can be hard to choose among the large and ever-expanding menu items. Last year, the 'Blaze Burger'

consisting of bacon, eggs, hash-browns and jalapenos on grilled Texas Toast was added and it was an instant success.

Bobby Gee's is open Tuesday through Saturday 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. In addition to their regular hours, Bobby Gee's hosts three 'Classic Car Cruise-Ins' when classic cars are on display in front of the diner every year. The 2023 dates are Saturday, May 13; Saturday, July 8 and Saturday, August 26, from 3-7 p.m. For more information, contact the diner at 731-352-5059.



Bobby Gee's

DINER

Bringing smiles one plate at a time!

Thank you McKenzie and our surrounding areas. We truly appreciate and love all our customers. We are humbled and grateful!

BEST WAITRESSES

Bridget McMullin <i>Winner</i>	Julia Towne <i>Finalist</i>
------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

BEST BREAKFAST WINNER

BEST BURGER WINNER

BEST COFFEE FINALIST

131 S. Main Street • McKenzie, TN 38201 • 731-352-5059



SHOP SMALL NOT BIG BOX

The importance of small businesses to the economy cannot be overstated. Though national chains often garner publicity, local businesses are equally, if not exceedingly, worthy of attention.

What defines a small business as "small" varies significantly, but these businesses are generally privately owned and generate far less revenue than big corporations. General consensus also defines small businesses as companies with fewer than 500 paid employees, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Here's a deep look at why small businesses are so vital, and why consumers should direct more of their purchasing power to smaller companies rather than the big box retailers and other national chains.

Autonomy and Diversity

The layout and offerings at national chains will be identical whether you live in the mountains or at the beach. Big box stores follow a consistent marketing strategy and look the same regardless of where they are located. That familiarity can come at the cost of variety. On the other hand, an independent business offers the products and services that are reflective of the customers and the community they serve.

Local Hiring Strategy

Certain big box retailers will hire local residents, but hiring policies may push for promoting from within the organization. This could mean relocating an employee rather than bringing in someone from the community who may be more in tune with local sensibilities. Small businesses may be more

inclined to hire residents they know and keep hiring centralized to the local area - something that keeps more resources and money in the community.

Adaptability and Change

Local businesses can move more quickly to respond to economic factors that require change. Since they are focused more on the needs of their customers rather than stockholders, changes can be implemented rapidly without having to go through red tape, meetings and updates to corporate policies. Changes also can be customized to the local community at large.

Investing in the Town

According to the financial resource Financial Slot, shopping at locally owned businesses rather than big box retailers keeps more money in the community. Local proper-

ty taxes and other taxes paid by the businesses go right back into the community. This helps raise overall value for homeowners and can even reduce their taxes. The funding helps keep police, fire and school departments functioning properly.

Turnover is Greater

While no one wants to see a small business fail, that fate is sometimes unavoidable. However, that turnover helps teach communities what was done poorly and helps others learn from those mistakes. It also means fresh businesses will come in and replace the old, driving new growth, opportunity and competition that keeps prices competitive.

The benefits of a thriving small business sector are numerous. Consumers can do their part by patronizing these firms more frequently.

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Dr. Jay Phipps
Best Pharmacist

A5750

CARROLL BANK AND TRUST — McKENZIE

The Best Bank

Carroll Bank and Trust is a community bank that originated in Carroll County in 1907. They currently serve Carroll, Benton, Gibson, and Henry County and will be entering the Henderson County market this spring. To most in the community they are known as CB&T; a bank that strives to provide a banking experience centered around excellence and where decisions are made at a local level by those you know and trust.

"At Carroll Bank & Trust we are passionate about the customers we serve and making their lives and our communities better. We are thankful for the trust that has been placed in us and we strive to continue to earn that trust daily. We believe in treating people the way we

want to be treated. We believe in delivering excellent service and in doing so adding value to the lives of our customers, communities, and shareholders." — Michael E. Cary, Chairman/President/CEO.

CB&T provides an extensive array of consumer and commercial banking products. They offer reward checking accounts for consumers, the most up-to-date digital services, and lending products for customers. They also offer investment products through CB&T Financial/Raymond James.

The leadership team at CB&T has always implemented their business model of providing a banking experience the community can count on with the customer's best interest in mind.

"I'm proud to say I am from McKenzie and that I can raise my family here. Carroll Bank and Trust has been a blessing to me and to our city. Being a



community bank means serving the community and I think we do an excellent job of that." — Brian Winston, City President.

Come see why Carroll Bank

and Trust in McKenzie is "The BEST BANK!"

If you are interested in learning more about Carroll Bank and Trust, you can visit their website at www.carrollbank.com.

com or find them on Facebook! For questions about opening a new account or loan inquiries, please call CB&T in McKenzie at 731-352-2282. MEMBER FDIC-Equal Housing Lender.

Thank you!

Thank you for allowing us to be your bank!

— Best Bank

— Best Bank Tellers, Rachel Foster and Karen Owen



A235



STEVEN MORTON STATE FARM

A Good Neighbor in Carroll County

BY KAREN FORESTER features@mckenziebanner.com

State Farm Insurance has had a presence in McKenzie for a long time. Many area residents will remember Ted Coleman, Lynn Pascal and Guy Grissom who operated local State Farm offices in town. Now, Steven Morton is proud to take his place as the State Farm agent serving McKenzie and Carroll County.

Steve Morton State Farm began operating in May 2022. When Grissom retired, he sold his Cedar Street building to Raymond James Financial. That gave Morton an opportunity to purchase the downtown building formerly housing Goose's Computers and Games. After extensive renovations, the downstairs now houses a reception area, three spacious offices, conference rooms and plenty of space to expand as the agency grows.

Morton, his wife, Brianne, and daughter, Brooklyn, will move into the upstairs apartment which is also being renovated sometime next month. "We are looking forward to becoming permanent McKenzie residents," said Morton. "Right

now, we're commuting every day from Jackson where I'm from."

Morton is a lifetime contractor with State Farm Insurance Company selling and servicing only their products. "I'm a small business owner operating under the State Farm umbrella. My goal is to grow the business as much as possible, I consider it a marathon, not a sprint," said Morton.

State Farm Insurance has been around for over 100 years and for the first 85 was the leader in writing auto policies. One of the reasons for their longevity, Morton believes, is a strong commitment to the local communities in which they operate. The company has "helped people manage the risks of everyday life, helped rebuild neigh-

borhoods, invested in our communities and supported education and safety initiatives across the country."

Morton realizes the importance of educating people about insurance. "I'm big on making sure customers understand the often complicated nature of their policies. I want to help them see what their coverage actually looks like," said Morton, "so there are no surprises when claims arise."

Morton's agency is a member of the McKenzie Chamber of Commerce and Industry and supports its programs, initiatives and events such as the Sweet Tea and Southern Pickin's Golf Tournament and Festival, Chamber Coffees and others. "We also support Bethel Athletics and McK-

enzie Elementary School fundraisers.

"I encourage everyone to follow our Facebook page, 'Steven Morton State Farm.' Every day folks will find lots of information, education and helpful tips when considering insurance possibilities. We often host customer appreciation events and giveaways, too," said Morton.

The State Farm agency is located in downtown McKenzie at 56 Lee Avenue and is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Tim Milligan and Lani Colvett work in the office alongside Morton. "We are a completely service driven agency. We believe in giving back to the community and being the 'Good Neighbor' behind the name."

Did You Know?

Anything that takes a driver's attention away from the road is considered a distraction. That includes adjusting the radio station, looking ahead at the route on a navigation system, reaching into the fast-food bag for a French fry, and answering a phone or responding to a text. Distractions can be visual (taking eyes off the road), manual (taking hands off the wheel), and cognitive (taking your mind off driving). Whether it is good for people or not, multitasking is now commonplace. That means individuals are juggling two or more different tasks at one time, even while driving. This propensity to try to fit more into a day may seem like it is improving efficiency, but certain studies show that multitasking often means the focus and attention to detail supplied to tasks isn't

as great when doing two things at once as opposed to focusing on one task at a time. In terms of driving while distracted by something else, the consequences can be great. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says about 3,000 Americans die in crashes involving a distracted driver every year. Younger drivers, or those between the ages of 15 and 20, are more likely to become distracted drivers than other age groups. The Canadian Automobile Association says drivers who drive distracted are eight times more likely to be in a crash or near-crash event compared with non-distracted drivers. Transport Canada's National Collision Database indicates distracted driving contributes to an estimated 21 percent of fatal collisions each year and around 27 percent of serious injury collisions. There is still work to be done to encourage drivers to be more attentive behind the wheel.

Steven Morton

State Farm®

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(731)-352-2244

I am honored to have been
chosen for this award.

Thank you all!

Best Insurance

Finalist



The Waters of McKenzie

MEETING THE HEALTH GOALS OF RESIDENTS



BY KAREN FORESTER features@mckenziebanner.com

The Waters of McKenzie is a rehabilitation and skilled nursing center operating since July 2021 when their parent company, Infinity Health Care Corporation, assumed ownership. Previously, the facility had been The Christian Care Center and before that Oak Manor Health Care Center.

"The Waters is a 66-bed, dual-certified facility which means we can meet the short or long-term health goals of our residents," said Administrator Julie Roberts. The Waters interdisciplinary team provides 24-hour

skilled nursing; physical, occupational and speech therapies; restorative therapy; early to late-stage dementia care; on-site psychiatric and psychological services and ongoing dementia and behavioral education." We also offer physical, occupational and speech therapies on an outpatient basis as well."

Rehabilitation is an essential element for restoring health and wellness. The Waters of McKenzie partners with Select Rehabilitation to help patients and residents achieve their goals. A national leader in therapy services, Select uses purposeful and functional interventions designed to promote health, prevent injury

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



PRE-WORKOUT TIPS FOR SENIORS

As physically active individuals age, they typically must change how they approach exercise. For example, rather than jumping two feet first into new activities like they might have done when they were younger, seniors may have to think about injury prevention and ways to improve their endurance prior to lacing up their sneakers. For most, that may boil down to taking various pre-workout steps.

- **Get enough rest.** The body requires adequate sleep and other rest during the day to stimulate muscle growth and repair. Exercise may not be as effective and it may be more dangerous if seniors are engaging without enough sleep. In addition, sleep deprivation can reduce reaction times, which can adversely affect workouts.
- **Emphasize stretching.** Stretching can improve flexibility and reduce the risk of muscle injuries. It also can improve range of motion in the joints. Stretching before and after a workout prepares the body for exercise and helps it recover.
- **Wear the proper footwear and clothing.** Sturdy, supportive athletic shoes and well-fitting workout wear can make working out more comfortable and safer.

The National Institute on Aging recommends finding footwear designed for the specific activity you'll be engaging in. Footwear that offers sufficient heel support and nonslip soles is beneficial as well.

- **Warm up.** Give the body an opportunity to acclimate during a warm-up period that will facilitate healthy breathing. Warming up also loosens up the joints and muscles for the exercise ahead. After a workout, seniors should cool down to reduce their heart rates and prepare for recovery.
- **Carefully consider pre-workout supplements.** Pre-workout powders and pills have become quite popular for exercise enthusiasts. Manufacturers may advertise that their products are loaded with vitamins and minerals that will help energize the body for a workout. However, they also may be fortified with caffeine. Do not take a pre-workout supplement without first consulting your physician, as certain products may adversely interact with medications you're taking for preexisting conditions.

Pre-workout steps can keep seniors safe and reduce injury risk from exercise.





The Waters[™] of McKenzie

A REHABILITATION & SKILLED NURSING CENTER

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

and disability and sustain or restore the highest level of independence possible.

The Waters employ a registered dietitian and dietary staff who provide three meals a day along with snacks based on the health requirements of each resident. There is a weekly weigh-in to ensure all dietary needs are met and that it supports the plan of care for each person's overall health.

There is an Activities Director who plans engaging on-site programs and outings for the residents. The Waters has their own transport van that can be used for field trips and to transfer residents to doctor appointments in the area.

"Our medical staff is the Hometown Health Care group directed by Dr. Terry Colotta who makes his rounds among our residents every other week," said Roberts. "In addition, we have an excellent 24/7



nursing staff of LPNs, RNs, CNAs and a Nurse Practitioner who is here five days a week."

The Waters of McKenzie received a superior five-star rating based on quality of care from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), a federal agency. "We also earned the Joint Commission National Quality Approval certification from the Nursing Care Center Accredita-

tion Program," added Roberts. "We are extremely proud of these ratings. Everyone on our staff works together as a team to ensure excellence."

Roberts and her staff understand the transition to a skilled nursing facility can be difficult for the resident and their loved ones. The Waters offers comprehensive healthcare services to meet individual needs ranging from short term rehab

services to caring for clinically-complex residents. The goal is to ensure families have peace of mind knowing their loved one is safe and in good hands.

When asked what she would like to communicate to the community, Roberts doesn't hesitate, "I want everyone to understand the financial process involved in getting a loved one into a facility. It's a very emotional time and the added stress can be overwhelming. Be prepared beforehand and know it's the State of Tennessee (TennCare) and not the care center that determines the patient liability portion."

"Being proactive about getting a loved one's estate in order before something happens is the best thing to do. Otherwise, it can take up to 45 days for approval and during that time, the cost is out of pocket," she said.

The Waters of McKenzie offers free tours to visit the facility and answer all questions. "Please feel free to call us and schedule your appointment soon. Understanding the steps necessary to transition a loved one into The Waters will relieve some stress and give people more time to focus on their family during a very emotional time," said Roberts.

The Waters of McKenzie is located at 14510 Highway 79. For more information, call 731-352-5317 or visit www.watersofmckenzie.com.



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WILLIAMS FURNITURE

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BY KAREN FORESTER features@mckenziebanner.com

Phil Williams worked for a short time as a traveling salesman for the H & C Furniture Company after graduating from Trezevant High School in 1964. That was when he began to learn about the furniture business. After serving in the Air Force Chaplaincy for four years, he left as a Staff Sergeant in 1969 and went to work for Holiday Furniture in Huntingdon.

Williams built strong relationships with Freddie Holiday and his staff, the customers, vendors and manufacturers until the mid-seventies when he decided to open his own store. Williams Furniture

originated inside 1,000 square feet of rented space in McMoresville, And, over 50 years later, it is still going strong.

Moving the store to McKenzie in 1977, Williams Furniture was first located in the downtown McKenzie buildings where Prater's Taters is now. He also owned the space next door and had three entrances across the front facing the square. In 1979, he decided to move to Highland Avenue and rented the building that formerly housed the bowling alley and is now B & R Supply. Over the next six years, Williams continued to grow his business by offering customers a large selection of quality furniture and superior service.

In 1985, he purchased the



buildings at his current location of 26 Broadway and has been there ever since. "I'm fairly sure we're serving the fifth or sixth generation of those folks who used to purchase their furniture in the early sixties from me," said Williams. "We pride ourselves on providing excellent one-on-one service to every person who comes in."

Williams has seen furniture buying habits change over the years. Where once people purchased a sofa, dining set, bedroom suite or other item when they needed it, today they purchase what they want, when they want it. "Years ago,

customers would buy furniture and take it with them or come back and pick it up. Now, everybody wants their purchases delivered," said Williams.

Whether people are just starting out in a new home, redecorating an existing one or renovating an old house, Williams Furniture offers customers the latest styles of quality furnishings in a friendly, service-oriented environment. Williams Furniture is open Monday through Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, contact the store at 731-352-7591.



Williams Furniture Co., Inc.

FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES

Thank you all! We appreciate your loyalty,
your friendship and your business.
Thank you for voting us Best Furniture Store!

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE BEST OF 2022

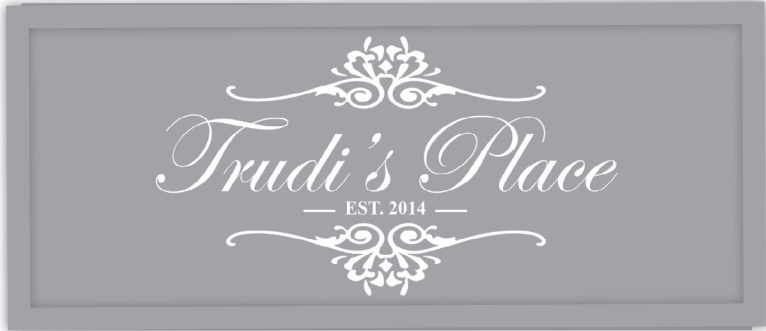
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Ice Cream	Dairy Queen	Hometown Hangout
Insurance	Farm Bureau Insurance	State Farm Insurance
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Lawn Care Equipment	Power Supply <i>(McKenzie Feed & Grain)</i>	C&S Outdoor Power Equipment
Lawn Care Service	D&D Lawn Mowing	Barksdale's Lawn Service
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Mexican	Maria's Mexican Restaurant	El Vallarta
Monument Services	Curtis Monument Company	Griffin & Powell Monuments
Motel	Best Western	
Nail Technician	Paula Pewitt	Bobby Traywick
Nursing Home or Assisted Living	The Waters of McKenzie	
OB/GYN	AHC-McKenzie	
Oil Change	Anita Ross	Pamela Evans
	Holmes Auto Repair	Peppers Ford
		The Quick Lube
Optometrist	Spivey Eye Clinic	
	Smith & Smith Optometry	

CATEGORY	WINNER	FINALIST
Paint Store	Bennett Hardware	Carroll County Lumber
Pest Control	Servall	HTP
Pharmacist	Jay Phipps	Brianna McKinney <i>(Baptist)</i>
Pharmacy	Phipps Pharmacy	Super Drugs
Photographer	Juleyanne Weatherford	Tammy Graves Photography
Physical Therapist	Julie Mansfield	Kendra Gilmore <i>(Dynamix)</i>
Pizza	Block City Pizza	Domino's
Plumber	Donald Tolbert	Dusty Graves
Postal Worker	Adam Burke	Mike Foster
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Public Official	Ryan Griffin <i>(McKenzie)</i>	Nina Smothers <i>(Huntingdon)</i>
Real Estate Agency	Taylor Real Estate	Stafford Real Estate
		Don Cook <i>(Premier Realty)</i>
Receptionist	Raven Cunningham <i>(Christian Family Medicine)</i>	Janet Goodrum <i>(Smith & Smith Optometry)</i>
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Salesperson	Gary Simmons	
Steak	Mallard's Restaurant	Old West Steakhouse
Storage	HWY 79 - Casey Drewry	Webb's Storage
	Brooks Storage	
Tire Dealership	Anderson Tires	Huntingdon Discount Tire
Veterinary /Animal Service	Tri-County Animal Clinic	Huntingdon Animal Clinic
Waiter/Waitress	Bridget McMullin <i>(Bobby Gee's Diner)</i>	Julia Towne <i>(Bobby Gee's)</i>



Thank you for voting me best Public
Official, but it takes an AWESOME TEAM
to make McKenzie great!
-Mayor Ryan Griffin

Best Firefighter: Brian Tucker
Best Law Enforcement: Ryan White



Trudi Bannister

Wayne and I are so honored to be chosen for this award!
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Phone: (731) 535-2028

PAY IT FORWARD

LOCAL BUSINESSES CAN HELP EACH OTHER

The power of small businesses is immense. However, starting a small business is no easy venture. The financial resource Fortunly states that roughly 22 percent of small businesses will fail in their first year of operation. Thirty percent fail because they run out of cash. One of the ways a small business can do better is to utilize the support of other local businesses.

Business owners often conduct market research to identify who their competition is and to determine if there is room in the market for their products or services. It's just as important for established business owners to keep up with the who's who in the business community, as doing so can pave the way for collaborative efforts that benefit all local businesses. Here are some ways small business owners can support one another.

Offer reassurance: Simply knowing they are not alone can help a small business owner survive. Owning a business can be stressful, and having another person acknowledge that it's alright to feel overwhelmed at times can be the spark owners need to press on.

Share opportunities: A business owner who



discovers a resource or an opportunity that worked for him or her, or even one that didn't work but may for another, can pass on the information to another small business owner. It's not about driving others down, but lifting them up.

Cross-promotion: Business owners can show support by promoting other businesses in their communities. Make a bulletin board (either in-person or online) of other local business cards to recommend. This exhibits your community spirit and builds camaraderie. Use every opportunity to refer complementary businesses. For example, a local pet shop may recommend a pet groomer or veterinarian.

Organize networking events: Whether it's done through a local Chamber of Commerce or individual efforts, small business owners

can spearhead events that get other business owners together to network and share ideas. These meetings can be informal to help others let off steam at the same time.

Volunteer and donate: Small businesses can meet other business owners, but also become more involved in their communities through volunteer events. Partner with charities or other local businesses to promote philanthropic efforts. School supply giveaways, beach sweeps, community park refurbishments, or even supporting efforts to clean trash from Main Street are great ways to get involved.

Small business owners willing to work together can collectively improve their communities, which should benefit everyone's bottom line.

6 OBSTACLES SMALL BUSINESSES FACE

Rewarding but tough may be the general consensus established entrepreneurs use to describe owning a small business. When working for someone else, individuals primarily only need to concern themselves with their own role in the company. When a person owns a company, the weight of that responsibility rests primarily and exclusively on his or her shoulders.

Regardless of their industries, small business owners often encounter similar obstacles. A greater awareness of such obstacles can help entrepreneurs ride the waves and be better prepared.

1. Client diversity: Putting all of your eggs in one basket can be an issue when running a business. An obstacle some businesses face is relying too heavily on the support and financial contributions of one client. Diversifying a customer base is the key to growing and maintaining a business.

2. Financial management: Some people are ideas people, some people are customer service people, and others are money people. Everyone handles these tasks differently. Properly managing the finances of a small business is essential to keeping it running smoothly. If it's possible to hire an accountant or bookkeeper knowledgeable in finance, all the better. However, software can assist novices with



keeping the books in check.

3. Burnout: Small business owners often take on extra hours and responsibilities to see their companies grow. Also, owners may not bring on adequate staff in an effort to save money or ensure their vision is adhered to. A lack of help can lead to fatigue and burnout. Trying to go it alone is one of the biggest mistakes an entrepreneur can make.

4. Over-dependence on a founder: The business needs to be able to run smoothly even when the founder or owner isn't on the premises. If the owner becomes ill or takes an extended vacation, operations need to flow. If the company is dependent solely on the owner being around day in and day out, it can stanch potential.

5. Quality and growth balance: Every small business wants to grow and continue to see profits rise. However, when growth starts to impede on the quality of the service or product, it may not be so beneficial. Business owners need to strike the right balance between expansion and quality.

6. Customer service: Business owners have to devote the right resources to maintaining optimal customer service. A happy customer often is a returning customer. Failure to address negative reviews or compromised service will make it harder to succeed.

Small business owners can learn about the common obstacles entrepreneurs face and then devote resources to avoiding them.

DID YOU KNOW?

Consumers who want to help the local businesses in their community succeed and attract more customers should know that the overall star rating a business has on online review sites such as Google and Yelp can go a long way toward compelling prospective customers to patronize a business. In their Local Consumer Review Survey 2022, the marketing experts at BrightLocal found that 85 percent of consumers indicated overall average star rating was an "important"

or "very important" factor in determining whether or not they would patronize a business. That star rating can be especially valuable when consumers are trying to choose which business to support, as 76 percent of survey respondents indicated their decisions would be influenced if one business had a higher average star rating than another they were considering. Consumers can consider these findings as they decide which site to utilize when they decide to write a review.

Conscientious consumers who want to help local entrepreneurs thrive may not need any extra incentive to support small businesses in their communities. However, that doesn't mean it isn't worth noting the tax benefits of buying local compared to buying online or in other towns or cities. Small businesses pay sales taxes to the city and county where the business is located, which means a significant amount of the money spent at local businesses is ultimately going to the community at large. In addition, local businesses tend to hire local residents, who pay taxes on their incomes. Those taxes also benefit the towns and cities where workers live and work. This ripple effect of supporting local businesses is one reason why the Small Business Administration estimates that, for every \$100 consumers spend at a small business, \$48 remains in the community.

Shifting consumer demands pose a challenge for any industry, including the agricultural sector. Farmers who want to ensure they're in the best position to meet consumer demands in the coming decades may be happy to learn that an aging population figures to work in the agricultural sector's favor. The Economic Research Service with the U.S. Department of Agriculture notes that individuals over age 65 are expected to make up a

greater percentage of the overall population in the years to come. That should, the ERS notes, benefit farmers, as older individuals tend to be more health-conscious with their eating habits than younger generations. The same trend will likely play out in Canada, where Statistics Canada estimates the percentage of individuals age 65 and older will increase to 22.5 by 2030, marking a nearly 10 percent increase since 2010, when just 14.1 percent of Canadians were 65 or older.

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