**Get in festive spirit with community holiday celebrations**

*Kick off holiday shopping season with Small Business Saturday Nov. 29*

Twinkling lights, caroling singers, shopping throngs and parades down Main Street: These are a few of the traditional ingredients that create the down-home holidays celebrated in communities across West Virginia.

Start the holiday season by shopping small to make a big difference in local towns. Small businesses are the heart of economic life in many communities across the country. Main Street West Virginia and its sister ON TRAC program work to revitalize the economy of small towns in the state. On Small Business Saturday, Nov. 29, these communities plan promotions, giveaways and other events to attract shoppers to their local small and independent businesses.

Accredited Main Street communities are Charleston East End, Charleston West Side, Fairmont, Kingwood, Mannington, Martinsburg, Morgantown, Philippi, Point Pleasant, Ripley, Ronceverte and White Sulphur Springs. The West Virginia ON TRAC cities are Belington, Beverly, Elkins, Kenova, Madison, Marlinton, Parkersburg, Parsons, Charles Town, Romney, Rowlesburg, Shinnston, Sutton and Wheeling.

Selected highlights activities for Small Business Saturday and small town holidays include:

BELINGTON

Belington City Park transforms into a North Pole Christmas village, the destination for the Polar Express Excursion train. Santa and a team of elves can be found in the Belington City Park every Wednesday through Sunday, 5:30 and 7:45 p.m., from now until Dec. 14,except Thanksgiving, Nov. 26 and 27.

Belington hosts the Christmas parade and Town Square Tree lighting Tuesday, Dec. 2, at 6 p.m. Caroling and a visit with Santa will follow the parade and tree lighting.

The Belington Library will be having a Christmas Craft Show Dec. 5 and 6, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

CHARLESTON EAST END

East End Main Street joins forces with The Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences of West Virginia to present the second annual East End Holiday Bazaar. The eclectic artisan showcase begins on Small Business Saturday, Nov. 29, and continues the next three Saturdays – Dec. 6, 13 and 20 – from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The bazaar features 17 registered East End Bazaar vendors in the front lobby and lower level lobby of the Clay Center. Various Bazaar artisans will showcase their one-of-a-kind wares, including locally made jewelry, bath soaps, clothing, visual art and more.

CHARLESTON WEST SIDE

West Side Main Street

West Side Main Street features a new monthly campaign called #ShopLocalWestSide for West Side merchants. The first Shop Local West Side Saturday will be Saturday, Nov. 29, and then monthly on the first Saturday each month in 2015.

The Nov. 29 event will feature special events including music, giveaway items and Santa photos from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the greenspace beside Fountain Hobby and 12:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the Charleston department store parking lot.

ELKINS

Santa’s Workshop provides activities for local and visiting children on Fridays and Saturdays during the [Polar Express](http://mountainrailwv.com/choose-a-train/polar-express) excursion train and holiday season in downtown Elkins. Hosted by downtown businesses, activities began Nov. 7 and continue through Dec. 13. Weekly activity schedules are available at the Depot Welcome Center and posted on [Elkins ON TRAC](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Elkins-ON-TRAC/184502304925960) Facebook. Tickets for the 2014 Polar Express are sold out. Tickets for the 2015 holidays go on sale Dec. 1, 2014.

Run the Merry Mile for healthy fun Dec. 5. The out-and-back course will allow the runners to lead off the parade as Santa prepares to ride down Davis Avenue and make his way to the North Pole. At the end of the run, participants are invited to celebrate in the Huntington Bank drive-through lot with refreshments and to watch the parade. This will also give participants premier access to the "North Pole" (YMCA) for visits with Santa. For more information, contact [chamber@erccc.com](mailto:chamber@erccc.com) or call 304-636-2717. Merry Mile participants may [register](https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ea2ob19u382fbf1c&oseq=&c=21f74660-bf96-11e3-831a-d4ae529ce48a&ch=22d2d950-bf96-11e3-836e-d4ae529ce48a) online. Sunset Chase participants will receive a special discount for the Merry Mile.

The Elkins-Randolph County Chamber of Commerce annual Christmas Parade & Santa Visit marches into town Dec. 5, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The Silent Night Christmas Tree Auction will be held at participating businesses through Dec. 5. Holiday shoppers are invited to make silent bids on beautifully decorated trees. Gift certificates and other surprises may be included.

The Dec. 6 Holiday Open House gives shoppers a chance to enter to win prizes with each purchase from a participating business. Five gift certificates will be awarded in amounts ranging from $25 to $100. Certificates may be redeemed through Dec. 31, 2014. Elkins ON TRAC is sponsoring the Holiday Open House.

On Dec. 7 at 6 p.m., the Davis & Elkins College Concert Choir presents Lessons & Carols at Davis Memorial Presbyterian Church.

FAIRMONT

Join the ninth annual Feast of the Seven Fishes, Dec. 13, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., 206 Adams Street. The Italian Christmas Eve tradition celebrates the day with food, artisan-crafted holiday gifts, music, cooking demonstrations and a street market. Local restaurants showcase their heritage ties with cultural favorites like lupine beans, fried smelt, stuffed calamari, pastries and breads.

KINGWOOD

Main Street Kingwood and local businesses are celebrating throughout the month with sales, giveaways and other attractions. On Nov. 29, Small Business Saturday gets perking with free coffee and doughnuts at JoDia’s Country Kitchen. The Thanksgiving weekend kicks off Kingwood’s business decorating contest. For this year’s theme of Christmas Around the World, participating stores pick a country such as France, Norway, Japan, England, Italy or Germany. The businesses bedeck their windows to represent the holiday customs in their chosen country. The decorating contest runs through December.

MANNINGTON

The Mannington Christmas parade takes place Dec. 6, 6 p.m.

The newly crowned King and Queen of Good Tidings will light the city Christmas tree immediately following the parade. The King and Queen are selected from the ranks of community volunteers nominated by the public.

Stroll along Mannington’s Market Street to enjoy the 17 festooned lampposts competing for votes in the Simple Gifts-themed Christmas Lamppost contest. Local businesses and organizations decorate their assigned antique-style lampposts to illustrate the theme of Simple Gifts. Winners of the Judges’ Choice and the People’s Choice will be awarded Dec. 6, after the parade.

MARTINSBURG

Main Street Martinsburg urges residents and visitors to “shop, dine and discover downtown Martinsburg” Nov. 29, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Old Town Christmas Parade begins at 5:45 p.m.

Open the “Doors to Christmas” with 24 holiday wreaths. The wreaths are on display, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., 1902 Building, 201 North Queen Street. The wreaths were decorated by local businesses, florists, nonprofit organizations and the community. On Dec. 4, the live auction kicks off with refreshments and music starting at 5 p.m. The wreath auction gets underway at 7 p.m.

MORGANTOWN

Main Street Morgantown and the Morgantown Area Chamber of Commerce join forces in a campaign to attract more foot traffic to downtown Morgantown. Customers who spend $25 or more at any business located in the Historic Downtown or Downtown Wharf Districts may enter to win one of the three iPads® that will be given away. Santa Claus will visit Arts Monongahela from noon to 4 p.m. for photos.  He will also present a book to each child who visits him.

For information on discount cards and other attractions, visit the Main Street Morgantown [news page](http://www.downtownmorgantown.com/events/sbs/) at <http://www.downtownmorgantown.com/events>.

On Dec. 5, the Morgantown parade marches down High Street starting at 6:30 p.m.

PHILIPPI

On Nov. 29, look for Small Business Saturday advertising and posters displayed in shop windows, provided by Main Street Philippi to participating businesses.

On Nov. 30, the Philippi parade begins 7 p.m.

The Philippi Candy Cane Hunt takes place Dec. 12, 5:30 p.m., at the Philippi Library.

RIPLEY

Main Street Ripley spotlights Shop Small Nov. 29 with prizes, refreshments and Shop Small giveaway items. The Snowball Drop – ping pong balls bearing store discounts good throughout the holiday season – signals the start of the annual Ripley Merchants Christmas Open House & Parade at 6 p.m.

Parade spectators are encouraged to bring canned food items to donate to the local food pantry by placing them in the grocery carts steered by the Main Street Teens. Santa will make an appearance and various musical groups will sing around the town.

Main Street Ripley is partnering with the local radio station C98-The Bull for a concert at the Alpine for Toys for Tots. The Main Street Ripley Office will serve refreshments that evening. Each participating business in Ripley will have an auction item on which shoppers can bid. The proceeds go to the annual Adopt a Family holiday event.

Winter Fest at Cedar Lakes, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., wraps up the evening with musical events, computer animated displays and more than a million lights.

RONCEVERTE

On Dec. 1, Ronceverte Main Street hosts a Christmas Open House. Businesses will stay open extended hours and offer free hot chocolate and other small refreshments from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

At 5:30 p.m., the line-up for the City of Ronceverte’s annual Christmas Parade assembles at the Ronceverte Island Park. The parade starts at 7 p.m.

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