

## **Shop Brick and Mortar Stores This Season**

It's November. A lot of people have already started the countdowns of how many days and weeks until Christmas. Let's not get too far ahead of ourselves. November holds some great holidays and traditions that shouldn't be overlooked.

November 19<sup>th</sup> is an historical day for Gettysburg. On this hallowed ground, 156 years ago, President Abraham Lincoln delivered The Gettysburg Address. A speech consisting of a mere 271 words that only took two minutes to deliver has become one of the best known speeches in American history. When Lincoln said "four score and seven years ago" he was referring to the signing of the Declaration of Independence. If you do the math, a 'score' is 20 years. Four score and seven years is 87 years. Gettysburg attorney David Wills wrote to the President inviting him to the dedication ceremonies and asked that Lincoln give "a few appropriate remarks" after the Oration by Edward Everett. It was Everett's two-hour, 13,607 word oration that was slated to be the "Gettysburg Address". What a difference two minutes can make. With a "few appropriate remarks" Lincoln was able to summarize his view of the war in just ten sentences. Because of those 271 words, those two minutes, those ten sentences, every November 19<sup>th</sup> Gettysburg celebrates Dedication Day in the National Cemetery. This year's guest speaker is award winning presidential historian Michael Beschloss. The following Saturday will be the Remembrance Day parade. It's such a beautiful weekend throughout the battlefield as people place beautiful flower arrangements at the various monuments.

We remember President Lincoln for his time and words in Gettysburg. However we should also remember him as the president who, by a presidential proclamation in 1863, called for a national Thanksgiving to be the final Thursday in November. In 1939, President Franklin Roosevelt changed the date of Thanksgiving to be the next to last Thursday in November, for business reasons. Then in 1941, FDR changed the date to the fourth Thursday in November. No matter what Thursday in November the holiday falls, there is one thing that is certain – the Friday after is "Black Friday". The day after Thanksgiving has been thought of as the beginning of America's shopping season since 1952. The term "Black Friday" didn't come into use until more recent decades. In Gettysburg the day after Thanksgiving is also the official kickoff to Christmas in Gettysburg.

For over 30 years the Gettysburg Area Retail Merchants Association (GARMA) has been the proprietor of Christmas in Gettysburg. GARMA owns and houses the town Christmas Tree, wreaths, banners and Santa's Shanty. The day after Thanksgiving GARMA brings Christmas to Gettysburg with the annual lighting of the Gettysburg Christmas Tree. This year, Friday, November 29, the square will be blocked from 5:30pm – 7pm so all can safely enjoy the festivities. Santa will arrive and light the tree at 6pm and then walk to his Shanty and open it to greet all the girls and boys (four legged friends are welcome also). Holiday music will be playing through the streets courtesy of Ultimix DJ's. One Lincoln and Blue & Gray Bar and Grill will be open serving warm, tasty food. The Gettysburg Hotel will graciously be serving free hot chocolate from 5:30pm – 6pm. The David Wills House will be open and admission is free that evening. Many GARMA members will be open later hours that evening. This is such a wonderful family friendly event that has become a great tradition for Gettysburg.

Another tradition that has been in place since 2010 is Small Business Saturday. This is always the Saturday after Thanksgiving. American Express first coined this phrase and came up with the idea of Small Business Saturday to encourage people to shop at brick and mortar stores that are small and local. This is in contrast to Black Friday and Cyber Monday which primarily encourage on-line sales luring shoppers with incredible deals. Gettysburg is still a small town where the merchants rely on the locals to sustain them year round, especially during the winter season. There are so many wonderful shops and eateries in Gettysburg that there's really no need to leave town to get your shopping done. Chambersburg St. boasts A&A Village Treasures, The Spirited Ladies, Fresh Boutique, Adams County Winery and Lord Nelson's for shopping and The Gettysburger, Mamma Ventura's and Ernies for lunch or dinner. York St. offers Gallery 30, Artworks, NerdHerd and Codori's on the corner with dining at El Costeno or The Upper Crust. Baltimore St. has True Friend's Boutique, The Christmas Haus, Union Cigar Club, Martin's Family Shoes, Red Bud House and J&P Winery for shopping and Blue & Gray Bar and Grill for lunch or dinner. Don't forget Lark and One Lincoln tucked in their corners of the square. Those are just your downtown brick and mortar's that you can support on Small Business Saturday and year round. GARMA has many other members to shop that are within 5 short miles from downtown Gettysburg. For a complete list of GARMA members visit [www.gettysburgretailmerchants.com](http://www.gettysburgretailmerchants.com).

Shopping local is the responsible thing to do. Promote our town, promote our businesses and be proud to say you bought it in Gettysburg.

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