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# In Depth

## Keep the business in Columbus

By **Kelsey Jochum**  
Copy Editor

In today's tough economy, it may be difficult for people to bring themselves to spend money the way they used to. People are encouraged to be more conservative with their money, and the younger generation is learning to save rather than spend. However, when money must be spent, the people of Columbus are encouraged to shop locally. With the creation of Columbus Bucks and the increasing number of new businesses, Columbus citizens are given incentive to keep the business right here in their hometown.

Even so, Columbus citizens seem to find it hard to spend money in their own community. They argue that Columbus doesn't offer the same selection as far as shopping, restaurants, and entertainment that the larger cities do.

of the many people in Columbus who frequently goes out of town to shop.

"On average, I'd say I go out of town about every two weeks; sometimes more often than that."

Nevertheless, Perault says there are aspects of the Columbus shopping scene that cannot be overlooked.

"I love the employees and the friendly atmosphere. I always feel more inclined to buy something from people when they are nice to me."

Senior Amy Pekarek has a different outlook on the Columbus shopping scene. After deciding to do all her Christmas shopping in town this year, Pekarek found that the town has a lot to offer.

"I spent one day over Christmas break shopping around town," Pekarek said. "I went to the mall out east and browsed through every store, and, to my surprise, I found many of my gifts at places I never would have

as well.

"I like to shop around here, so that when I get to go out of town, it makes it more special."

Though Columbus has seen quite a bit of expansion in the past few years, the hopes for new businesses



haven't died yet. Area consumers want to see retail stores such as Target, Von Maur, and Forever 21 establish themselves in Columbus. Restaurants are also a keen topic, with places such as HuHot, Panera Bread, and Goodrich Dairy keeping consumers hopeful.

If so many people want these new businesses, why can't Columbus get them? Sandie Fischer, the Retail and Membership Development Chairperson at the Chamber of Commerce here in Columbus, has the answer. According to Fischer, retail is right on the mark based on

our population, and, as we grow, opportunities for more stores will arise.

Since Columbus is also the home to Behlen's World Headquarters and many other big industries such as BD's and Katana, it makes our community very successful.

"Places across Nebraska are envious of these industrial opportunities," Fischer said. "These industries create job opportunities in which people come to work, get a pay check, and then spend that pay check right back into our community."

However, despite Columbus' strong industrial field, there are commercial businesses that sometimes can't make it. Last year,

doing very well, the parent company was going under, and they had to choose certain stores to close. Columbus was one of them."

As far as seeing new businesses arrive in Columbus, Fischer says that it all has to do with how much we support our community.

"The more you shop here, the more our retail sales will go up, and companies look at that. They will know how much we are spending in our community and whether or not we support our local businesses. Likewise, if we go out of town to shop, that only shows those companies that we are willing to travel the distance to shop there, and they won't see a need to open a store here in Columbus."

So what's the an-



Claire's Boutique closed down in Columbus after being open for only a few years. Fischer can explain the cause for that as well.

"Claire's was owned by a larger corporation on the east coast, which was losing money. Even though the store in Columbus was actually

answer? Simple, shop locally. Go to those stores in Columbus that people wouldn't normally think to go into. It might be surprising to see that all of the things people feel they must go out of town to buy can be found right here in good ol' C-town.



"Honestly, the only store in Columbus that I will shop at is the Buckle," said junior Alise Perault. "I need a little variety." Perault is one

thought to go into before."

Pekarek, who likes to go out of town to shop every so often, appreciates the businesses here in Columbus

## What business would you like to have in Columbus and why?

IN MY OPINION...

"Popeye's because we all need a taste of southern fried culture."  
- Ian Robak

IN MY OPINION...

"American Eagle because they have good clothes."  
-Hannah Fuchs

IN MY OPINION...

"Olive Garden because of their awesome breadsticks. You can walk in, get them, and walk out."  
-Alex Wallick

IN MY OPINION...

"Scheel's because they have all your sporting needs. That way I don't have to order my shoes. They're huge."  
- Trace Murray

## Respect the money system

By **Olivia Sonderman**  
Staff Reporter

It's a question that resonates within thousands, maybe millions of Americans' heads each day: where did our economy go wrong? What choices led our country into the seemingly bottomless pit of debt that we are in now? The answer is simple: the abuse of the money system.

When money is treated with a certain level of respect, it is a symbol of one of the highest moral codes man can claim. A worthless piece of paper with a man's face printed on it has value only because humans give it value.

For example, it is a universal belief that when a dollar or any other currency is spent, the person spending his or her money expects to acquire a product they want or need in return for that piece of paper. Yet, why would anyone give away a car, a house, or candy bar for a piece of paper? People only make this ridiculous trade because that piece of paper is backed by humanity's choice to make it worth something.

And here is where the money system failed and where the economy began its downhill slide. What has been dubbed a 'recession' began in September 2008 with people choosing to not treat money with reverence. Consumers used credit and loans when they had no money to pay back their debts.

Then, the banks that lent money to customers failed to pay back loans because of the number of their customers who had been unable to pay their loans. The massive losses of banks lead to the buying out or crashing of these financial institutes.

Next, those same people who obtained a loan without means to pay it back realized their house prices were decreasing. Money would be loss if they sold their homes for less than their mortgage, so instead they foreclosed. Foreclosure rates escalated and the housing market began to decline.

All of the above led to elevated food and utility prices and higher unemployment. Debt forced consumers to stop spending, or else they turned to buying cheaper foreign products.

The result was a lower GDP (Gross Domestic Product) for the United States. The country faced a bottomless pit of debt.

Ironically, the government's remedy for the country's debt and the failing economy was spending even more money. From insignificant seventeen billion dollar bail outs to a mind blowing seven hundred eighty four billion dollar economic stimulus package, the government seemed to be handing out alms for any failing system.

Overall, this period of spending seems to have been a success. In August 2009, the Federal Reserve Bank made a statement declaring an end to the recession was in sight. The proclamation seems correct; the economy is slowly but steadily being restored.

However, Americans must ask themselves this: can the United States government continue to spend billions upon trillions of dollars on the economy and get positive results? The

economy can be improved with financial aid, but sooner or later the government will be unable to continue pumping billions into businesses.

**"Ironically, the government's remedy for the country's debt and failing economy was spending even more money."**  
-Olivia Sonderman

Thus, the government should be more conservative about its spending practices and allow the economy to survive on its own. It should be stricter about the regulations used for spending.

Should the United States send millions of dollars to Haiti to aid its refugees when there are millions of Americans living in extreme poverty? Does the United States have a duty to its own

people before taking care of the global community? What about the huge sums of money that are poured into health care? Should a health care reform be instated if it will cost another trillion dollars?

The government must learn to draw the line; the outrageous spending must stop if the United States wants to continue to thrive as a nation. However, it starts with all Americans. Spend wisely; buy American products; pay back loans. Above all, respect the money system.

For more information on the economic situation, go to these sites:  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7748874.stm>  
<http://www.morebusiness.com/10-signs-recession>  
<http://www.usaspending.gov/>

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