

# City Beat

## Valdosta Shops Small For Small Business Saturday



Since 2010, the first Saturday after Thanksgiving has been a day dedicated to showcasing and supporting local small businesses throughout the country.

With approximately 28.8 million businesses across the U.S., small businesses account for 99.7% of all businesses and serve as the backbone of our economy.

The Valdosta Main Street office encourages citizens to observe the importance of supporting our locally-owned businesses with our wallets. These businesses give our downtown area a distinct personality that makes shopping and visiting here a unique and special experience.

Throughout the city limits, Valdosta also has a variety of businesses that provide all our shopping needs.

Remember, SHOP SMALL on Small Business Saturday, Nov. 26.

Shop local.

## VPD Creates Positive Presence Via Golf Cart Patrol

Equipped with lights and sirens, three new street-safe golf carts unveiled recently by the Valdosta Police Department are expected to increase visibility in our neighborhoods, continue to build rapport with community members, and reduce crime. "Crime has significantly dropped in the past four years," said Valdosta Chief of Police Brian Childress. "We expect these efforts to help to reduce those numbers even further, especially as we head into the holiday season."

Purchased almost entirely with Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funding, the golf carts will be placed into use the Friday after the Thanksgiving holiday.

Although incidents of burglary and car theft tend to be slightly higher during the holiday season, Chief Childress said he expects these new VPD assets to help reduce crime.

"These are not your typical golf carts. "You can't outrun these," he said.

In addition to eliminating any barriers that patrol cars might have, the quieter and less intimidating golf carts allow officers to engage in face-to-face communications with



Officer Vernotis Williams test drives one of three new golf carts purchased by the VPD with JAG funding.

the public. Don't be surprised to see the officers assigned to these patrols out talking with residents in city neighborhoods as they continue to establish their positive presence. The VPD has employed a variety of techniques over the years; these golf carts are yet another way of showing VPD's presence and concern for the Valdosta community.

## Tree Lighting Kicks Off Holidays for Valdosta

Mayor John Gayle and Valdosta First Lady Peggy Gayle will officially kick off the holiday season in Valdosta at the annual Christmas Tree Lighting, on Friday, Dec. 2, at 5:30 p.m. Attendees will enjoy a special visit from Santa Claus, as he assists with the lighting of the fully-decorated 30-foot Christmas tree located on the front lawn of City Hall, located at 216 E. Central Avenue.

This year's event will also feature the St. John's Catholic Church Youth Choir, under the direction of Donna Farwell,

who will lead attendees in the singing of a few holiday favorites.

At the Christmas Tree Lighting, the Valdosta Youth Council will be accepting donations from community members for the Mayor's Motorcade. VYC members will also host a table where attendees can sign greeting cards for military service members who are deployed during the holidays. These cards will be mailed with the American Red Cross Holiday Mail for Heroes Program in time for the holidays.

While enjoying the festivities, citizens

may enjoy hot cocoa, hot apple cider and other light refreshments provided by the Valdosta Main Street office.

Citizens are encouraged to stay downtown after the Christmas Tree Lighting to enjoy the fun dining, shopping and entertainment experience of First Friday, through 9:30 p.m., as well as this year's final Art Walk, from 5 to 8 p.m., which allows citizens to experience art in Downtown's most elegant shops.

For details, contact the Valdosta Main Street office at 229-259-3577.

## #Giving Tuesday

Black Friday. Shop Small Saturday. Cyber Monday. Now, there is Giving

Tuesday—a global day of giving fueled by the power of social media and collaboration. Celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving, Giving Tuesday kicks off the charitable season, when many are focused on their holiday and end-of-year giving.

One of the best ways to get involved is in your own community. Stay informed by visiting the city's website at [www.valdostacity.com](http://www.valdostacity.com) and by tuning into Metro Channel 17 on Mediacom. You can also stay informed by connecting with us on Facebook, Twitter or Youtube.

## City Celebrates 156th Birthday at SGRL

On Wednesday, Dec. 7, the City of Valdosta will celebrate its birthday at the South Georgia Regional Library (SGRL), from 4-6 p.m., observing the date that the city was chartered 156 years ago.

Many Valdostans may be unaware of the history available at their fingertips at the SGRL. For example, did you know that library patrons have access to a broad collection of Valdosta history books—in addition to more than 200,000 books on other topics? Did you know that a local genealogist teaches free classes monthly, and patrons have access to Heritage Quest and Ancestry (typically valued at over \$100/year) at no cost through the GALILEO system, an initiative of the University System of Georgia?

Make it a point to get to know your family and city heritage. Start by visiting the SGRL on Dec. 7, where city and library staff will be available to help you signup for the weekly city E-news, share a variety of other information about your city and community, and much more.

Call 229-333-0086 for information, or visit the SGRL at 300 Woodrow Wilson Drive.



## Valdosta Fire Chief Shares Holiday Safety Tips

The holidays are filled with many distractions—from holiday cooking to spectacular decorations to family visits around the Christmas tree. In the midst of the excitement, Valdosta Fire Chief Freddie Broome wants to remind citizens to practice some simple safety tips to ensure a safe and enjoyable holiday season for all.

### Christmas Tree Care

- Water your Christmas tree daily to keep it fresh and safe.
- Never put candles on or near a tree.
- Keep trees at least 3 feet away from any heat source or direct flame (including cigarettes).
- Don't block exits with tree or other decorations.

### Lighting

- Be sure your lights are UL, ETL, or CSA tested for safety.
- Check and replace lights with cracks, frayed wires and general damage.
- Put only as many light strings together as manufacturer's directions say is safe.
- Do not to overload outlets.
- Never run extension cords under rugs, across areas where there is a lot of foot traffic, or near furniture.
- Unplug all lights before leaving the house or going to sleep.

### Decorations

- Use flame-retardant or nonflammable decorations whenever possible.
- Keep decorations 3 feet away from any heat source or direct flame.
- Beware of decorations hanging on, from or above stoves and fireplaces.
- Remember to dispose of your tree promptly and properly.
- Don't leave a dry tree inside the house or garage or leaned up against the house.

### Miscellaneous tips

- Be sure all smoke detectors are properly working.
- Keep all matches and lighters out of sight and out of reach.
- Be sure candles are away from decorations, kids, pets and trees. Never leave them unattended.
- Never leave the kitchen when using the stove top. If you must leave, turn the heat off first.
- Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers to use outside. Remind them to keep all smoking materials in their pockets.



"Fire safety is a matter of simple common sense," said Chief Broome. "Citizens who follow these general fire safety precautions can prevent potential fires, injuries or deaths this holiday season."





# 3 Opportunities To Bring Cheer To Others

## Shop with a Cop

The Valdosta Police Department is collecting donations for its Shop with a Cop program, which will take place on Monday, Dec. 19, at 7 p.m., at the Wal-Mart Supercenter located at 3274 Inner Perimeter Road. This program aims to brighten the holiday season for Valdosta children and their families by providing selected youth with some holiday shopping money.

This program relies solely on monetary donations. Donations can be made payable to the City of Valdosta Shop with a Cop and may be dropped off at the Valdosta Police Department (500 N. Toombs Street). Contact VPD Officer Vernotis Williams at 229-293-3099 for more information or to donate.

## Mayor's Motorcade

The City of Valdosta is making the holiday season special for persons with developmental disabilities and behavioral health needs who reside at the Parkwood Developmental Center. On Tuesday, Dec. 6, at 10 a.m., Mayor John Gayle, VFD Chief Freddie Broome, and members of the Valdosta Fire Department will deliver gifts to the 117 patients—ages 7 to 71—who reside at the facility.

Local businesses, civic organizations, churches, schools, scout troops, and other interested groups or individuals are encouraged to help with the collection of gifts for this event. Items being collected for patients include clothing for men and women, hair dryers, small radios and clock radios, matchbox cars/trucks, small musical instruments, and toiletries such as solid deodorant, body wash, body spray and cologne/perfume.

Monetary donations will be used to purchase uncollected items on the list. Unwrapped donations and checks made payable to the Valdosta Fire Department will be accepted through Monday, Dec. 5, at 106 S. Oak Street. For more information, contact Tangela Rowe at 229-333-1835.

## Shop with a Fireman

The Valdosta Fire Department is also bringing holiday cheer to children through its Shop with a Firefighter program, which will take place Dec. 12 at 6:30 p.m. The program seeks to identify and help Valdosta youth who are survivors of recent fire losses.

This program also relies solely on monetary donations. To those interested in supporting this cause, donations can be made payable to the City of Valdosta Shop with a Firefighter and may be dropped off at the Valdosta Fire Department, Station #1 (106 S. Oak Street). Contact VFD Capt. James Clinkscales at 229-333-1835 for more information or to donate.

# Give A Kid A Bike Program

Give a kid a bike for Christmas.

Local businesses, organizations or individuals may donate new bicycles that are unable to be used in their current condition due to a missing or malfunctioning part. Valdosta firefighters obtain the missing parts to fix the bicycles, which are then distributed to children with assistance from the local Division of Family and Children Services (DFACS) program in time for Christmas.

The program is designed to benefit children who are survivors of local fire incidents and to help them have a happy holiday.

All donations may be dropped off at the VFD Station #1, located at 106 S. Oak



Street, through Dec. 15. The event, which will also take place at VFD Station #1, will take place Dec. 16, from noon to 5 p.m.

For more information, contact the VFD at 229-333-1835.

## Deck the Halls Not the Streams

Although it may be the “most wonderful time of the year,” it can also be the most wasteful. Holiday shopping, gift-giving and family festivities can generate an abundance of waste, so here are a few recycling tips to help keep our city and streams clean:

- Recycle leftover wrapping paper, and avoid using foil or tissue paper.
- Decorate eco-tastically and save money by using natural materials.
- Use re-usable bags when shopping, or go without a bag altogether.
- Give green gifts, and keep them eco-friendly.
- Participate in the city’s Christmas Tree Recycling Event.

Remember, only rain goes down the storm drain! For more information, contact the Stormwater Division at (229) 259-3530.

## Bring One For The CHIPPER

The City of Valdosta and Keep Lowndes-Valdosta Beautiful (KLVB) will again host this year’s “Bring one for the Chipper” event—a Christmas tree recycling event designed to help citizens dispose of their used trees in an environmentally friendly manner. Holiday trees will be recycled by chipping, a process that has a variety of benefits for our community and environment.

Chipping trees for mulch also helps our local government comply with Georgia’s yard trimmings ban which prohibits the dis-

posal of yard trimmings in municipal solid waste landfills.

Residents can drop trees off at any of these three locations from Dec. 26, 2016, through Jan. 7, 2017: The Home Depot, at 1825 Norman Drive; the Wal-Mart Super Center, at 3274 Inner Perimeter Road; and Mathis Auditorium, at 2300 N. Ashley Street.

Trees may be dropped off at any of these sites beginning on Saturday, Dec. 26; however, citizens who drop their trees off on



Saturday, Jan. 7, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at any of the above sites will receive a free tree seedling (while supplies last).

Call KLVB at 229-671-3698 for more information.

## Holiday Sanitation Schedule

The City of Valdosta will be closed on Thursday, Nov. 24, in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday. However, as always, Valdosta sanitation crews will be out collecting from their regular routes.

The Sanitation Division will collect residential garbage only on Thanksgiving Day. Recyclables and yard waste for Thursday and Friday routes will both be collected on Friday, Nov. 25.

No sanitation services will be offered for the Christmas and New Year’s holiday, which this year falls on Dec. 26 and Jan. 2 -- the only two holidays that sanitation workers take off for the entire year. Residential garbage, recyclables or yard waste will NOT be collected on these dates. However, citizens who normally have their sanitation collected on Mondays should place their garbage, recyclables and yard waste at the curbside by 5 a.m. on Dec. 27 and Jan. 3 for both Monday and Tuesday pickups.

For more information, call 229-259-3590 or visit [www.valdostacity.com/residential-sanitation-services](http://www.valdostacity.com/residential-sanitation-services).



# CHRISTMAS in *Downtown Valdosta*

## CARDS FOR VETERANS

Now Through  
Dec. 2



Citizens are invited to sign holiday greeting cards for veterans and military service members who are separated from their family members during the holidays. Once these cards are filled with signatures and warm wishes, they will be mailed through the American Red Cross Holiday Mail for Heroes Program. Greeting cards will be available for signing until the Christmas Tree Lighting, on Dec. 2.

## FIRST FRIDAY/ART WALK

Dec. 2  
6:30-9:30 p.m.

The popular First Friday event will feature live music, dining specials, shopping, and lots of community fun! This First Friday will also include the year's final Art Walk from 5-8 p.m., which allows you to come Downtown and experience art in the most specialized, eclectic shops Valdosta has to offer.

You can also experience wine and beer tasting at all participating Art Walk locations with a wristband that costs \$20. All proceeds will be used by the Public Art Advisory Committee for future community art projects.

## CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS



The Valdosta Main Street office has released its 24th edition in the series of the Downtown Valdosta Christmas Ornaments, which makes the perfect holiday gift for that special someone. The red ornament was designed by the Main Street staff and features the Strand-Alamo Theatre building located at 206 N. Patterson Street. The building is now home to Birdie's Market.



The 2016 ornaments cost \$10 each, and ornaments from 2010-2016 can be purchased for the same amount. Ornaments from 2001-2009 can be purchased for \$6 each. These ornaments from previous years are only available while supplies last. Citizens may purchase these collectibles at the Main Street office, located on the first floor of the Valdosta City Hall Annex, at 300 N. Lee Street. Office hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays. For more information, call 229-259-3577.

## CHRISTMAS PARADE

Dec. 3  
5 p.m.

The Greater Valdosta Community Christmas Parade—one of Valdosta's most popular holiday traditions—will begin at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 3.

The parade will start at Woodrow Wilson Drive, proceed down N. Patterson Street, and end at the Department of Health Building. Creative holiday floats will be judged on overall appearance, special effects, creativity, workmanship and use of the theme.

## GIRLS NIGHT OUT

Dec. 15  
5-8 p.m.

Gather your girlfriends and join us Downtown for a fabulous night of shopping, refreshments and fun. Your favorite stores will be open late to help you find the perfect gifts for everyone on your list; and better yet, you can register your holiday wish list so he can't go wrong.

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information about holiday activities in Downtown Valdosta or throughout the year, visit [www.valdostamainstreet.com](http://www.valdostamainstreet.com) or following them on Facebook. Residents may also call them at 229-259-3577.



It's the most wonderful time of the year in historic downtown Valdosta! Celebrate the season all month long with 12 different days of events to put you in the holiday spirit! Details at [valdostamainstreet.com](http://valdostamainstreet.com)

<p><b>Nov 26</b></p> <p>Small Business Saturday</p>	<p><b>Dec 2</b></p> <p>City Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony @ 5:30 pm</p> <p>Art Walk 5-8 pm</p> <p>First Friday 6-9 pm</p> <p>Dr. No @ Cinema 7 &amp; 9:15 pm</p>	<p><b>Dec 3</b></p> <p>Children's Cookie Decorating @ Birdie's Market 10 am - 12 pm</p> <p>Christmas Paint Party @ Artists on Ashley 1 pm</p> <p>Frozen @ Cinema 3 &amp; 7 pm</p> <p>Christmas Parade 5 pm</p>
<p><b>Dec 8</b></p> <p>Suite Surrender @ The Dosta 7:30 pm</p>	<p><b>Dec 9</b></p> <p>Nightmare Before Christmas @ Cinema 7 &amp; 9 pm</p> <p>Suite Surrender @ The Dosta 7:30 pm</p>	<p><b>Dec 10</b></p> <p>Breakfast with Santa @ 121 N. Patterson 9 am</p> <p>Children's Cookie Decorating @ Birdie's Market 10 am - 12 pm</p> <p>Pictures with Santa Under the Christmas Trees @ Urban Garden 11 am - 1 pm</p> <p>A Muppet Christmas Carol @ Cinema 5 &amp; 7 pm</p> <p>Suite Surrender @ The Dosta 7:30 pm</p>
<p><b>Dec 15</b></p> <p>Girls Night Out 5-8 pm</p> <p>Suite Surrender @ The Dosta 7:30 pm</p>	<p><b>Dec 16</b></p> <p>It's a Wonderful Life @ Cinema 5 &amp; 7 pm</p> <p>Suite Surrender @ The Dosta 7:30 pm</p>	<p><b>Dec 17</b></p> <p>Children's Cookie Decorating @ Birdie's Market 10 am - 12 pm</p> <p>Home Alone @ Cinema 7 &amp; 9 pm</p> <p>Suite Surrender @ The Dosta 7:30 pm</p>
<p><b>Dec 21</b></p> <p>Literature Out Loud for Children @ Book &amp; Table 7 pm</p>	<p><b>Dec 22</b></p> <p>Literature Out Loud for Adults @ Book &amp; Table 7 pm</p>	<p><b>Dec 23</b></p> <p>Prix Fixe Dinner @ Book &amp; Table</p> <p>Yoga by Candlelight with Yoga Central @ Art &amp; Soul 6 pm</p> <p>A Christmas Story @ Cinema 7 pm</p>