

Shopping Guide 2016

November 21, 2016

by Tom Jewell

By now, the holiday elves have stocked the storefronts along Shaker Square and Larchmere, where merchants, artisans and restaurateurs dream of wrapping up the year with a flourish!

The festivities kick off over Thanksgiving weekend with the annual **Holiday Stroll**, featuring free horse-and-buggy rides up and down Larchmere Boulevard from noon to 4 p.m. on Friday and Saturday (November 25 and 26).

With numerous holiday specials and extended hours, shoppers wielding a “**SHAD Card**” - offered through the Shaker Square Area Development Corporation - can get **additional discounts** at roughly two dozen participating businesses (visit shad.org/member-benefits).

Destinations include the **Fiddlehead Gallery** at the corner of East 128th Street, where Larchmere Merchants Association President Susan Rozman also operates a United Parcel Service access point for “ready-to-go” packages.

“We have a lot more men’s gifts this year, with men’s jewelry lines, along with an expanded toy and mobile section,” Rozman said, adding that the in-store outcropping of rocks, minerals and fossils offers an ever-changing selection.

Down the boulevard at 12712 Larchmere, the **Dancing Sheep Boutique** celebrates “Second Thursdays” with trunk shows from area artists and designers.

“And located upstairs, **American Crafts** has fabulous gift items as well,” boutique owner Lynne Alfred- Hanson noted.

In stock, there are fiber art collage fashion pieces by Diana Prekup with the Textile Arts Alliance and hats by Tatiana Rakhmanina.

Dancing Sheep shoppers-on-a-budget can find offerings such as luggage tags and a red wine stain remover spray by Chateau Spill, Alfred-Hanson added.

To pick up some wine for all occasions, shoppers can run across the street to the reopened **DiVita’s Larchmere Deli & Beverage**, which was shut down for renovations after a van-crashing ATM machine heist early in the year.

Over at **Loganberry Books**, the slate for the Larchmere Holiday Stroll includes the “Indies First” celebration, featuring book-signings by at least a half-dozen authors already confirmed.

“Our popular holiday pop-up gift store, **Otis’ Old Curiosity Shop**, (OOCs), opens in mid-November and runs through the end of the year,” said owner Harriett Logan.

Set up in the Loganberry Annex Gallery, OOCs features local artists, fair trade crafts, toys, educational gifts, games, 2017 calendars, holiday cards and literary tchotchkes.

Loganberry’s annual **Holiday Open House** will be held December 7 beginning at 7 p.m., with a traditional offering of music, fine cheese and good wine.

Meanwhile, back at Shaker Square, what began as a holiday pop-up store is now a permanent shop in the form of **Cosmic Bobbins**, located between **Yours Truly** and **Fire** restaurants.

“We started in Tremont and came over here on a temporary basis, but just fell in love with the location and the people; we couldn’t leave,” said Cosmic Bobbins store manager Monie Lewis, who started as a “sewing apprentice” and now teaches classes, for which gift certificates are available.

Shifting from primarily “up-cycled” merchandise to 65 local vendors and fair-trade products and crafts, Cosmic Bobbins founder Sharie Renee offers Cleveland clothing lines, screen printing, embroidery, t-shirts, baby clothes and stuffed animals.

And when it comes to women’s holiday fashion trends, Renay Fowler makes things crystal clear. “‘Bling’ is in,” said the owner of **Fashions by Fowler**, also celebrating their fourth anniversary on the Square. “And, ‘bling’ is our thing.”

Yes, she specializes in a whole line of “bling-wear” for the holiday season, including shoes, purses, hats, and clothing.

“Whether you want to accessorize an old outfit, to give it a new look and some pizzazz, or just step into a party and shine from head to toe in something new, we have it here: all with embellishment,” Fowler said.

Located across North Moreland Boulevard, **Deweys Coffee House and Popcorn Shop Factory** will embellish the holidays with seasonal drinks including peppermint, pumpkin spice and hot cider, and chocolate-drizzled kettle corn and their fruit-flavored “Crazy Corn” in yuletide colors.

Coming off of the busy Thanksgiving centerpiece season, **Alexander’s Floral Designs**, located



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between **Captain Tony's Pizza & Pasta Emporium** and the new **JuiceUp**, has been making the most of its limited shop space for over 15 years.

“Flexibility is the name of our game,” said Anne Roth, who owns the store with her husband Rick. “We have to switch over really quickly from Thanksgiving to Christmas and Hanukkah. We can’t just jump ahead with different displays going at once.”

This year’s crop of poinsettias will be arriving in early December and Alexander’s also brings in Hanukkah’s blue and white-themed floral colors for the season as well, Roth noted.

Get your shopping done early and support **Small Business Saturday** sponsored by American Express. On Saturday, November 26, join the community and support our neighborhood’s independent business owners. If you’re an American Express card holder, you can earn two times the reward points if you register for Shop Small through December 31. And you’ll help our community thrive!