

# GASTON ALIVE

MAGAZINE

HOME | GARDEN | STYLE | FUN | FOOD | HAPPENINGS

## Celebrate Tradition Shop Downtown Belmont

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# FROM THE PUBLISHER

By the time you read this, Halloween will have come and gone, and it's officially the start of the holiday season. There is a lot to be excited about-more than I can list here! There is Shop Small Saturday on November 24th in downtown Belmont which kicks off a multitude of events in Belmont, including Boutique Belmont at Stowe Manor, a Christmas Tree Village and more. Of course there is the yearly spectacle of the lights in McAdenville, Christmas parades in every Gaston County municipality, and so much more!

Before all of the rush begins, let's be sure to remember those less fortunate, and contribute time or money to those causes you hold dear. There is so much strife and division in the world, the holidays are a time to take a breath, be selfless instead of selfish, be thankful, and try to spread a little joy.

Happy Thanksgiving!

David

featured this month

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CHRISTMAS IN BELMONT

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FIRST ANNUAL LANTERN  
PARADE

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BEN DUNGAN'S KID LOGIC



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# on the cover



On The Cover are downtown Belmont Shoppers Erica Steppe of Meraki Interiors and Jamie Mendoza of the Belmont City Planning Department, in front of Belmont's Specialty Foods. For the full Belmont holiday schedule of events, see page 6. Photo by Rick Haithecox, graphic design by David James.



To be part of our team, or to submit art, photo or story ideas, please email us at: [info@gastonalive.com](mailto:info@gastonalive.com)

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MAIN STREET

# THINK BIG— SHOP SMALL!

Photo taken at Meraki Interiors,  
35 North Main, Belmont

## SHOP DOWNTOWN BELMONT!

Lately it seems like everything we possibly need in life can arrive at our doorstep in a couple of days—and with free shipping! No need to put on clothes and leave the house, and certainly no need to fight traffic and interact with a live human being behind a counter. Unless you're seeking a personable experience.

It's definitely true! When you shop local, a real live person does a happy dance when they get your order. Historic Downtown Belmont offers a collection of over fifty unique specialty shops and eateries in a beautiful and charming small town setting. With treasured antiques, hand crafted pottery and jewelry, customized gifts, local wines and specialty foods, there are plenty of great choices for customers seeking one of kind unique gifts. You must admit, you smile big and feel like dancing when a store owner thanks you by name for shopping in their store. In return, small-business owners in Belmont will continue to build their businesses to serve you and your needs.



When you shop local, you support your local economy. Your taxes are going to support your community, and you are supporting jobs in your community as well. The best part? Those dollars keep being paid forward—the local person that made you your morning latte will spend their tip money at the local restaurant on their lunch break, the restaurant owner will sponsor an event that brings more people into downtown Belmont, and so on and so forth. Approximately 73 percent of the money spent at locally owned businesses stays local, compared to 43 percent of the dollars spent at non-locally owned stores, and zero percent of money spent online are retained in Belmont. So when you Shop Small this holiday season, you'll not only find a pair of running shoes, clothes, antique furniture or a unique gift, but you'll be giving the gift of a sustainable community.







# SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY – November 24

Downtown Belmont will be **OPEN FOR BUSINESS** for Small Business Saturday as businesses roll out the carpet with holiday merchandise, discounts, refreshments, and special promotions.

On Saturday, November 24, businesses throughout Downtown Belmont will celebrate Small Business Saturday. Created in 2010, Small Business Saturday encourages holiday shoppers to visit locally owned stores to check off their shopping lists.

This annual event falls on the first Saturday after Thanksgiving – or as some know it – the recovery day after Black Friday. But as Black Friday has crept into Turkey Day, Small Business Saturday offers more mindful shoppers a way to enjoy Thanksgiving and then support the local community two days later. Be sure to support Belmont's local shops and find that special little something from AR Workshop, Bandera Home Décor, Belmont's Specialty Foods, Blythe Gallery, Bliss Gallery, Catawba Antique Mall, Doc's Comics, Gigi's Boutique, Happy Dog Café, Jeans Flowers, Jolie Boutique, Meraki Interiors, Parker & Company, Piccolo Antique Mall, South Main Cycles, Surprise Me and Walk & Run.

## BELMONT CHRISTMAS VILLAGE

**Sponsored By City of Belmont and Belmont's Specialty Foods**

Each holiday season, downtown Belmont lights it up and kicks it off with a night of festivities. This year, children of all ages will enjoy activities all month long including a magical "Festival of Trees". The mayor will host the traditional lighting of the tree on the City Hall lawn on Saturday, December 1, 2018 at 6:00 PM followed by a holiday stroll down Belmont Main Street and through Stowe Park to experience the inaugural "Festival of Trees". The evening will include special music, hot chocolate and cookies provided by Belmont's Specialty Foods.

Throughout the month of December in Belmont's Christmas village you will find holiday shopping and dining, horse drawn carriage rides, children's activities, food vendors, live music, hay rides, holiday characters and a visit with Santa. Come enjoy a magical holiday stroll down Historic Belmont Main Street and Stowe Park's "Festival of Trees".



*Belmont Christmas Parade  
A 69 Year Tradition!*

## HOLIDAY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

In Historic  
Downtown Belmont

<b>November 22</b>	Turkey Day 5k   BCO Benefit	<b>Time: 8:00 A.M.</b>
<b>November 24</b>	Shop Small Saturday	<b>Time: All Day</b>
<b>November 24</b>	Breakfast With Santa At Cherubs	<b>Time: 9:00-11:00 A.M.</b>
<b>December 1</b>	Girls on the Run 5K	<b>Time: 8:30 A.M.</b>
<b>December 1</b>	Belmont Christmas Lighting Ceremony	<b>Time: 6:00 P.M.</b>
<b>December 4</b>	Belmont Christmas Parade	<b>Time: 3:30 P.M.</b>
<b>December 6-8</b>	A Taste of the Holiday's	<b>Time: 6-Until</b>
<b>December 6-8</b>	Horse Drawn Carriage Rides	<b>Time: 5:30-9:30 P.M.</b>
<b>December 13</b>	Horse Drawn Carriage Rides	<b>Time: 5:30-9:30 P.M.</b>
<b>December 14</b>	Horse Drawn Carriage Rides	<b>Time: 6:00-10:00 P.M.</b>
<b>December 15</b>	Belmont Christmas Village	<b>Time: 5-9 P.M.</b>
<b>December 22</b>	Santa Hustle Half Marathon & 5K	<b>Time: 8:00 A.M.</b>

For more information please visit: [www.cityofbelmont.org](http://www.cityofbelmont.org)



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# MOUNT HOLLY'S FIRST ANNUAL Lantern PARADE



The first annual Lantern Parade in Mount Holly was a great success, with over 100 beautiful lanterns and a great turn out!

The Mount Holly Community Development Foundation supplied the funds to bring Olive Stack here from Listowel, County Kerry Ireland to teach the workshops for making lanterns. The Foundation also provided funds for the materials for the area teachers and school children, and for PurrCussion (Panthers drum line) to lead the parade.

UPIC Health out of northern Virginia provided the prize money for the teachers and artists.

The Gaston Arts Council supplied the money for the official video which can be found here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mt3NjqCxGr5EdkfAZtCoT23jIOeEKEKH/view>



Congrats  
and thank you to  
Emily Andress and  
Awaken Gallery  
for being awesome!



# KID LOGIC AND FRESH APPLES



BY BEN DUNGAN

It's funny what you think is true as a kid and what is actually true.

As a kid, I used to wonder who had the job of turning off the ocean at night. Not the entire ocean, mind you, just the one at Ocean Isle Beach. The one I was at. The one that mattered.

I just knew someone had to have the job of turning it off - making those waves go flat and stopping the tide from coming in and going out. Why would they leave it on all night if no one was going to use it?

In typically kid fashion, I never thought about who turned it back on in the morning. I just assumed somebody did. No matter what time I hit the beach, the ocean would always be back on. Like clockwork.

In my mind, all I could picture was this huge metal lever on the wall with a handle at the top. To shut off the ocean, you pulled the lever down. To turn it back on, you pulled it up. And it would be housed at the pier. I don't know why I assumed it was at

the pier, it just seemed like command central for all things beach-related.

You'd expect this kind of thinking as a kid. Some call it kid logic. Ira Glass, host of the popular public radio show *This American Life*, defines kid logic as "perfectly logical arguments that somehow arrive at

perfectly wrong conclusions".

As a kid, you don't always have all of the information, so you just fill in the blanks with what you perceive as the answer.

I always thought old people lived in Virginia. Young people lived in North Carolina. And when you got old, you were allowed to move to Virginia.

I knew this to be true because my paternal set of grandparents lived in Southwest Virginia in a city called Roanoke. I also knew this to be true because when we would visit, their friends and relatives would stop by, and they would be old too.

I was probably 6 or 7 years old at the time when I had this epiphany. Let's face it, a large percentage of the population was older than me at this time in my life.

It didn't matter that I had another set of grandparents in Charlotte where I lived. All I knew was that Virginia is for old people. Not lovers. Maybe old lovers. Who knows. Virginia, more specifically Roanoke, was different than anything I knew growing up in Charlotte.

So in my recent quest to find the apple like the ones my grandfather would peel and give to us, I just assumed, I could only find it in Virginia. Apparently, not only is Virginia for (old) lovers, but they are also for Stayman-Winesap apples, or







Staymans as my grandparents called them.

I have never heard of anyone go on a hunt for Stayman apples around here. Sure, they go to apple festivals and may even hit up an orchard, but they go because that's what you do. You buy fresh apples in the fall.

Stayman apples are hard to find around here. Or so I thought. In my 42-year-old brain, I had convinced myself that they could only be purchased in Virginia.

Stayman apples ripen later in the season, typically around early to mid-October. I knew I wouldn't be in Roanoke or the surrounding area by the time these apples became available. I just knew there wasn't a good local source of Stayman apples near me.



Oh wait. There is. There is a perfectly good source in York, SC. My kid logic strikes again.

Windy Hill Orchard and Cider Mill has become a popular

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So I just knew they wouldn't have grow and sell Stayman

apples there because they weren't in Virginia. But I thought I'd ask anyways, as a long shot, just so I could say I covered my bases.

And to my surprise, they do offer Staymens. Of all the apples they sell there at Windy Hill Orchard, 80% are Staymans.

I may not be a kid anymore, but I still have a little bit of kid logic swirling in my brain.

I couldn't have been more wrong. And I couldn't have been more excited for once that I was. This only means one thing. I'm staying young. At least in my brain, I am.

It also means they won't shipping me up to Virginia anytime soon.

To learn more about Windy Hill Orchard and Cider Mill, visit them online at [www.windyhillorchard.com](http://www.windyhillorchard.com).





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