

Saturday is second Buy Local Day

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After risking everything to build a local coffee wholesale business in Bellingham, Moka Joe Inc. owner Trudy Scherting really appreciates her customers.

"It's truly like magic when people recognize that when you start to support local businesses, it comes back to you," she said.

Community support and connections with other local merchants are primary reasons why she and her hus-

band Joe Scherting are participating Saturday in the second-annual Whatcom County Buy Local Day.

The event encourages shoppers to buy products from locally owned, independent businesses. Whatcom County merchants will be offering gifts, prizes and specials. Mallard Ice Cream is offering a free cup of Moka Joe Coffee, for instance.

Sustainable Connections, a network of local businesses, is organizing the event. The concept is that buying from

local merchants keeps money in the local economy.

In addition to spending the money they make locally, merchants often donate to local fund-raisers and charities, said Brenthaven Travel Store manager Sherry Anderson. Brenthaven will be participating for its second year in Buy Local Day.

Local merchants don't necessarily feel animosity toward big corporations.

Anderson worked at the mall for 10 years, and said REI employees send her cus-

tomers if they know she carries a product they don't have.

Scherting said that if it weren't for Starbucks, she wouldn't be in business.

"They brought specialty coffee to the average drinker," she said. "It's a culture."

For more information, including a list of participating businesses and sponsors, go to www.ThinkLocal.org or call 647-7093.

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