



## MEET THE LOCAL BUSINESSES

who are the foundation of our community

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**LOCALLY OWNED BUSINESSES ADD SUBSTANTIAL STRENGTH TO OUR LOCAL ECONOMY, ARE THE FOUNDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY, AND THE KEY TO OUR FUTURE.**

Get insight to many local businesses and what makes them special to the area. Learn more or find new businesses you didn't know about in the 2018 edition of the Killeen Daily Herald Shop Local Businesses!

### SHOP LOCAL BUSINESSES 2018

is a KDH MEDIA GROUP PUBLICATION

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5

**THE BENEFITS OF  
LOCAL NEWSPAPERS**

5

**THE HIDDEN BOOST THAT  
BUYING LOCAL PROVIDES**

8

**BUDGET-FRIENDLY  
LOCAL ACTIVITIES**

9

**LOCAL DINING SPOTS  
FOSTER COMMUNITY**

12

**THE BENEFITS TO  
JOINING A LOCAL GYM**

13

**THE BENEFITS OF  
SHOPPING FARMERS MARKETS**

14

**HOW COUPLES CAN BENEFIT FROM  
HIRING LOCAL WEDDING VENDORS**

15

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# ZERO-IN CARPET CLEANING COMMITTED TO YOUTH AND CLEAN CARPETS

## Zero-In Carpet Cleaning

Harker Heights  
(254) 350-9484  
[www.killeencarpetcleaningcompany.com](http://www.killeencarpetcleaningcompany.com)

Zero-In Carpet Cleaning located in Harker Heights, has been providing carpet cleaning and restoration services done by former veterans for ten years and "proudly serve Killeen, Harker Heights, Nolanville, Temple, and other surrounding areas".

New owners Travis and Doree Collins took over the company back in January. Doree Collins shared why they wanted to run a business.

"To create an opportunity to grow stronger as a family through our work as a family owned business and to teach business and skills training to youth," said Collins.

The business supports training soft skills to young adults.

"We support the 501c3 non-profit youth organization, Un-Included Club with skills training that includes training in soft skills like communications, discipline, leadership, and carpet cleaning trade skills," said Collins.

Collins shared what makes their business different than others.

"Our commitment to teaching young people a trade separates us from the rest! We believe that it is not enough to simply just own a business for our own families benefit," said Collins.

Collins shared the business's mission.

"To provide reliable and efficient service and teach the value of efficient work and communications," said Collins.

Collins shared what their customers like most about their business.

"We receive positive feedback about our

successful carpet cleaning, timely service and excellent communications," said Collins.

"Many times, customers will thank us for being on time and everyone appreciates our follow up calls, or text that we make to check on carpets and ensure that they have dried in a timely manner."

The business does offer discounts to military and educators and they currently have a three-room special for \$64.99 as shown on their website.

Collins stated that it's about the customer.

"We are committed to open and honest communication about the customers service needs," said Collins.

Zero-In Carpet Cleaning's hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and mailing address at 108 East FM 2410 Suite F PMB 203, Harker Heights, Texas 76548 for a free estimate, pricing, or to make an appointment call (254) 350-9484, or visit <http://www.killeencarpetcleaningcompany.com>.



## QUALITY CLEANING

*The most affordable. Try to beat our prices*

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We are staffed with the most experienced experts in the business, and the passion they have for their work is absolutely visible when you see them in action.

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• Nolanville • Temple • Surrounding Areas



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or Call Doree or Travis Collins at (254) 616-9624 to learn about our specials!



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[www.killeenvetclinic.com](http://www.killeenvetclinic.com)

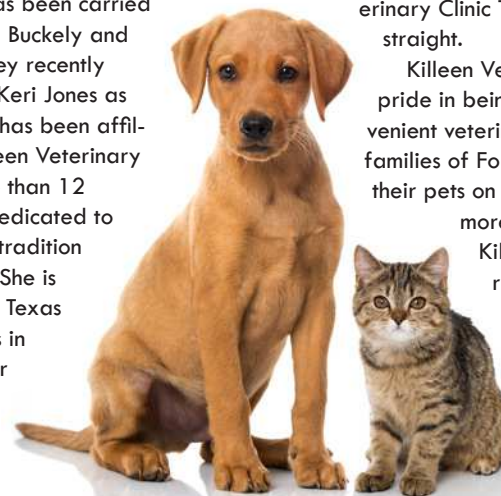
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## Killeen Veterinary Clinic

1321 Pershing Dr, Killeen  
 (254) 634-0242  
[www.killeenvetclinic.com](http://www.killeenvetclinic.com)

Since 1961, Killeen Veterinary Clinic has served the Killeen area offering personalized, state of the art care for small animals. Drs. Bil Roach and Wendell Kearney left a legacy of caring and compassion that has been carried on by Dr. Brad Buckley and his staff. Buckley recently welcomed Dr. Keri Jones as Partner. Jones has been affiliated with Killeen Veterinary Clinic for more than 12 years and is dedicated to continuing the tradition of excellence. She is a graduate of Texas A&M and lives in Killeen with her husband and two children.



With 57 years of service to animals of Central Texas, pet owners can rest assured their pet receives the very best care. From vaccinations to advanced cases, the doctors treat every patient as if it were their own. Readers of the Killeen Daily Herald have voted Killeen Veterinary Clinic The Best for 5 years straight.

Killeen Veterinary Clinic takes pride in being the area's most convenient veterinary neighbor to the families of Fort Hood and welcomes their pets on a daily basis. After more than half a century, Killeen Veterinary Clinic remains committed to excellent service, compassionate care and celebrating the human-animal bond.

**Kenny and his staff proudly say Thank You for selecting us The Best.**

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## Wells Laundry

Killeen, Harker Heights, Copperas Cove  
[www.wellslaundry.com](http://www.wellslaundry.com)

**Loads Large & Small  
 BRING IT ALL!!**

Wells Laundry is a locally owned and operated business established in 1977. Our goal has always been to provide state of the art self-service laundries to serve the Fort Hood area. The company has grown over the years from dingy wash houses to clean, safe stores equipped with computerized washers and dryers. However, the price to wash a load of clothes remains low. Today, Wells Laundries have washers that

will do loads from twenty to ninety pounds. Customers can wash virtually anything in our laundries and they do.

Wells Laundries are open seven days a week from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m. This would not be possible without a great staff of laundry attendants to assist customers and keep the laundries clean. We are constantly adding new, improved equipment to insure that our patrons receive the best service possible.

Wells Laundry appreciates its customers and will work hard to remain the best self service laundry in the area.







# THE BENEFITS OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

Local newspapers play vital roles in communities across the globe. The Information Age has changed the way many people get their news, but local newspapers continue to serve as valuable resources for readers interested in learning more about and becoming more involved in their communities.

While local publishers continue to adapt to the changes brought about by technology, the following are a handful of benefits unique to local newspapers.

looking to connect with their communities.

## LOCAL NEWSPAPERS CAN STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES

Local newspapers are great resources for residents who want to become more active in their communities and learn more about community events. Local newspapers often showcase community events like carnivals, local theater productions and projects like park cleanups. These are great ways for readers to

*Local newspapers do their part by providing affordable and effective advertising space to local business owners looking to connect with their communities.*

## THE HIDDEN BOOST THAT BUYING LOCAL PROVIDES



Though consumers no doubt understand how buying from local merchants can benefit those merchants, few may grasp just how beneficial buying local can be to their entire communities. In 2012, Civic Economics, an economic analysis and strategic planning firm, analyzed data from 15 independent retailers and seven independent restaurants, all located in Salt Lake City, comparing those businesses' local economic impact with four national retailer chains and three national restaurant chains. The study found that the local retailers returned 52 percent of their revenue to the local economy, a

figure that dwarfed the revenue returned by the national chains, which returned just 14 percent of revenue to the local economy. Restaurants provided an even bigger boost to local economies, returning 79 percent of their revenue compared to just 30 percent for the national chain restaurants. The reasons for these disparities include local businesses spending more on local labor and relying more heavily on local service providers. So while buying local may be more convenient and eco-friendly, it also can greatly benefit local economies.

## LOCAL NEWSPAPERS KEEP READERS UP-TO-DATE ON THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES.

Globalization may be here to stay, but that does not mean local communities are no longer home to newsworthy events. National and international newspapers and 24-hour cable news channels can keep men and women up-to-date on national and world news, but in many instances, local newspapers are the only means people have to learn about what's going on in their own communities. Local politics impact residents' lives every day, and local newspapers cover local politics extensively.

## LOCAL NEWSPAPERS BENEFIT NEARBY BUSINESSES

Small business owners often connect with community members via local newspapers. A strong, locally based small business community can improve economies in myriad ways, creating jobs in the community and contributing tax dollars that can be used to strengthen local schools and infrastructure. And local newspapers do their part by providing affordable and effective advertising space to local business owners

become more active in their communities and build stronger communities as a result.

## LOCAL NEWSPAPERS CAN BENEFIT CHILDREN

National newspapers may have little age-appropriate content to offer young children, but local newspapers tend to include more soft news items than national periodicals, and such stories typically are appropriate for young readers. According to Newspapers in Education, students who participated in an NIE group in Florida performed significantly better in spelling and vocabulary than non-readers. Additional studies have indicated that students who use newspapers in the classroom perform better on standardized reading tests than those who do not use newspapers in class.

Many local newspapers have played vital roles in their communities for decades, providing a go-to resource for local readers and business owners.



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www.popalockkilleen.com



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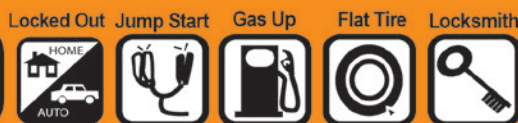
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auto, home, and business. We can execute any locksmith services with expediency and fair pricing, to include:

- auto chip keys & remotes
- rekey, lock repair, door hardware,
- lockpicks
- access control & master keys.

"Our technicians and locksmiths are all FBI background checked as required by the state of Texas DPS. They are certified

## Pop-A-Lock

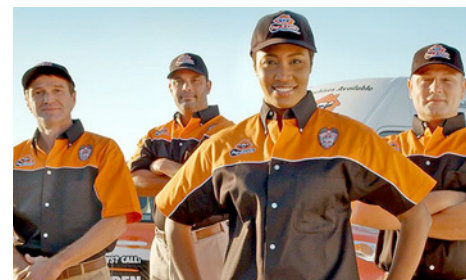
Killeen  
(254) 554-9966

www.popalockkilleen.com

and licensed professionals. They are dedicated to helping people in need.

"As a **community service** Pop-A-Lock offers the Emergency Door Unlocking (EDU) Program AKA PALSavesKids. Whenever human life is in danger; most often when a child is inadvertently locked in a car, Pop-A-Lock will rescue the child FREE-of-charge. Over the past 23 years, Pop-A-Lock has rescued about 5,000 children from cars in the Killeen area. There is only one Pop-A-Lock! Beware of scammers who use our name and charge exorbitant prices.

www.popalockkilleen.com



## The Settlement Restaurant

Home of

## "Big Hoss" B-B-Q

9502 East Trimmier Rd.

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Restaurant available at no charge Monday - Thursday (meal purchase required per person in attendance) for parties of 40 persons and above - Hail & Farewells, Corporate Lunches, Conference Functions, Holiday Events, & Banquets

www.bighossbbq.com

## The Brand In Demand



"Big Hoss" was established in February 2005 and is owned and operated by Walter, Sheryl and Kelly Brown. Our mission is to provide customers with a large quantity and quality of food as well as excellent service at a fair price.



Our method of barbecuing allows the smoke from the wood pellets, as well as the rubs, to become an ingredient, resulting in no creosote or gas taste.

Our Big Hoss staff goes to Fort Hood each month to serve free meals to the

## Big Hoss BBQ

9502 E Trimmier Rd, Killeen  
(254) 699-4677

www.bighossbbq.com

Soldiers at the USO, and are present at "Welcome Home" ceremonies at Fort Hood to provide free meals to families, soldiers and volunteers. We also partner with the USO during tragic events to ensure first responders and support teams are provided meals.

We consider our employees and our community as our own family and display this by supporting the Killeen Free Clinic, feed 1st responders on 9/11 of each year, support Junior Live Stock Show & Trimmier 4H, AUSA Scholarship Program, Killeen Annual Rodeo.

We attribute our success to: 1) Our customers who truthfully speak of our core values and our Mission Statement. 2) The Young staff (first-time jobseekers from our local high schools and universities) who provide friendly and efficient service to our customers and share a passion for helping others. 3) Honesty, Integrity and mouth watering, great tasting B-B-Q.



## RNC Construction

103 W Ave E, Copperas Cove  
(254) 542-7622  
www.rnc-construction.com

Copperas Cove's RNC Construction, since 2004, has completed quality residential and commercial projects for our local community. RNC has a hard-earned reputation for its "attention to detail" that comes at a reasonable price. Which saves everyone time and money without sacrificing quality.

This should come at no surprise for RNC Construction has over 40 years of combined construction experience.

When it comes to new construction, remodeling, general maintenance, carpentry and exterior improvement demands associated with residential and commercial projects, customers can rest easy. RNC has won the Best of the Best Award in Killeen for eight years running and is a VA approved contractor.

RNC has also proudly served the Central Texas business community with a vast array of high quality services: metal fabrication, welding, mold remediation, demolition, and even outdoor kitchens.

RNC has thrived due to a referral-based business approach. In an age of expensive

## RNC Construction

television advertisement, the company has succeeded primarily due to customer satisfaction which has spread through "word of mouth".

Killeen is unique in many ways but, perhaps, the one thing that has earned RNC the reputation it enjoys, is that those in the company have a sense of duty to the local veteran community. This has led to a sense of pride in their work ethics and craftsmanship when it comes the military population.

"Our local veteran and military community were here when we needed them, so we want to be here for those who need us," a company official stated.

All jobs are insured and warranted- so there is no need to worry.

For more information, contact RNC Construction, located at 103 W Ave. E., Copperas Cove, Texas or visit <http://rnc-construction.com>. Contact Alan Procter or David Hull by phone at 254-542-7622. Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Ask about our military discount.



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# BUDGET-FRIENDLY LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Nights out in a big city might can make for a welcome change of pace from time to time. Such nights can stretch budgets, making it more financially savvy for non-city dwellers to stay close to home. Small towns and medium-sized boast plenty of budget-friendly activities for people looking nights out on the town.

## PAINT AND SIP

Paint and sip events are fun, affordable ways to gather with friends. People who sign up for such events, which may be held in bars, restaurants, studios, or elsewhere, are guided step-by-step as they recreate a featured painting. Some paint and sip events allow guests to bring their own alcohol, while events held at bars or restaurants may provide alcohol for an extra cost.

## COOKING CLASS

Whether heading out with your significant other or a night with friends, a cooking class can be more unique, educational and affordable than a night out at a restaurant. Some classes may offer discounts to large groups, so enlist some friends if the goal of the night is fun and not necessarily romance.

## BOWLING

Bowling is a fun, affordable activity that people of all skill levels can enjoy. If you have enough friends interested in making a night of bowling, reserve a lane or lanes in advance so you won't have to wait. And if everyone has a good time, look into creating a team and joining a league. Many bowling alleys host league nights that can

also serve as great opportunities to meet people.

## LIVE MUSIC

Arenas and football stadiums are not the only places that showcase talented musicians. Music lovers with a passion for live music can visit local venues that cater to local musicians or even more established professionals who play small venues. Open mic nights at local bars can introduce music fans to new artists and/or styles of music, and can provide great opportunities to meet fellow music lovers in your area.

While big city residents may never lack for entertainment, small towners and residents of medium-sized cities can no doubt find plenty of fun and affordable things to do in their communities.



## KILLEEN BOWLERAMA

(254) 699-5222

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**Friday & Saturday Noon - 1am**

## Killeen Bowlerama

Corner of Rancier & 38th St,  
Killeen, TX

[www.killeenbowlerama.com](http://www.killeenbowlerama.com)

## Killeen Bowlerama

The Killeen Bowlerama opened its doors in 1958 and ushered in family entertainment to the Killeen/Harker Heights community. Would-be bowlers have been rolling through ever since, establishing this place as a landmark for the past 56 years. With its daily and nightly offerings of great bowling, food, drinks, and an expert pro shop, there is much to love here.



The current owners, Jim and Jean Maxson (owners/managers) and Steve and Chris Osbourne (owners/silent partners) have been running the Bowlerama since 2002, continuing its mission to provide bowling competition and entertainment to the Killeen area. The Bowlerama has hosted several state bowling tournaments in the past which

## Killeen Bowlerama

922 N 38th St, Killeen  
(254) 699-5222

[www.killeenbowlerama.com](http://www.killeenbowlerama.com)

Mon & Wed: 12:00 pm - 11:00 pm  
 Tues: 11:00 am - 10:00 pm  
 Thurs: 4:00 pm - 11:00 pm  
 Fri & Sat: 12:00 pm - 1:00 am  
 Sun: 12:00 pm - 10:00 pm

have encouraged hundreds of bowlers to the neighborhood, benefiting local businesses in the vicinity as well.

The Maxsons believe what makes the Killeen Bowlerama different is that they are truly hands-on with their customers, working hard to satisfy their wishes. As a family-owned and operated business, the staff is so friendly they make their customers feel like part of the family. Here, all the employees join together to create a great environment for work and play. With its many flexible hours, bowlers can play the lanes even up to 1:00 in the morning (on Fridays and Saturdays).

The Bowlerama hosts Central Texas College classes each fall and spring. It also offers both summer and fall bowling leagues which are quickly filling, so be sure to sign up and get in on the fun!





# LOCAL DINING SPOTS FOSTER COMMUNITY

*Diners are often delighted at the caliber of food and service at independently owned eateries.*

Dining out is a great way to celebrate life's milestones or simply reconnect with friends and loved ones. Research firm NPD Group found that, by the end of 2015, restaurant visits by consumers increased by 700 million compared to just five years prior.

While chain restaurants invest heavily in advertising, independently owned restaurants do not have those same resources. Multi-unit chains also have more pull with suppliers and might be able to negotiate better deals, or can spread operational costs across various locations. Too often diners are not aware of the vast array of tasty, well-priced and artisanal foods awaiting them just down the street. But dining out at local eateries can be beneficial in various ways.

## HIGH-QUALITY FOOD

Many local establishments have complete control over their suppliers and menus. As a result, they can be picky with regard to the vendors they use and the

produce, meats, dairy, and other ingredients that they select. Many small, independently owned restaurants team up with local organic farmers and distributors to supply a farm-to-table experience that many diners now enjoy.

## FREEDOM OF EXPERIMENTATION

Although chain restaurants may have to meet approval from administrative boards and marketing departments before they can introduce new fare, independently owned restaurants can let their diners decide which foods remain on the menu and even adapt to community trends. Local restaurants may take pride in serving cultural or regional foods.

## ABILITY TO CUSTOMIZE

Independently owned restaurants may be more amenable to adapting recipes or making substitutions to meet diners' requests. Skilled local chefs can think on the fly and modify recipes, which may not always be possible in chain establishments.

## CROWD CONTROL

Local restaurants tend to be smaller and more intimate than many chain restaurants. This can translate into a calm dining experience. When crowds are small, the noise level inside the restaurant may be muted and service may be fast because there aren't as many tables to serve. Furthermore, local establishments, although concerned about making a profit, may be less worried about table turnover rate, preferring to let diners linger if it means repeat business.

## FAMILIAR FACES

Some diners enjoy being a "regular" at their favorite local restaurants. Local dining spots also become gathering locations for residents in the know, instead of passing-through tourists or commuters. Much can be said about the advantages of patronizing local eateries. Men and women who want unique dining experiences can give local, independently owned establishments a try.

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# WITH OVER 40 YEARS OF TRUST, JWC CONTINUES TO PROVIDE THE KILLEEN AND FORT HOOD AREA WITH PROPERTIES



**JWC • Jim Wright Company**

3800 S W.S. Young Dr #101, Killeen  
(254) 526-5921  
www.jwcrentals.com

The Jim Wright Company, or JWC, has been open for business since 1974. Located at 3800 South W.S. Young Dr., #101, in Killeen, owner Jim Wright opened his business to meet the real estate needs of the growing local economy of the Greater Killeen and Fort Hood areas. Their motto is, "Doing Business the 'Wright Way' since 1974," a motto they stand behind every day.

JWC is a full-service real estate company. They handle both the sales and leasing of residential and commercial properties, as well as handling the property management aspects of real estate, crucial to this area with the heavy military presence and many inevitable PCS (Permanent Change of Station) orders which are handed down to soldiers and families who have plans to return to the area at a later date.

Customers say that what they like the best about JWC is that they have the most properties to offer in the area. Customers also appreciate the fact that JWC hosts customer appreciation lobby events at the beginning of every month. The company has been voted "Best Rental and Property Management Company" by the readers of the Killeen Daily Herald for 12 of the last 13 years, as well, showing that JWC is a company that the public can trust.

Wright has remained an active community supporter throughout his many years in the Greater Killeen-Fort Hood area. According to local author Gerald D. Skidmore, among Wright's other charitable works, he was also the founder of the area's Habitat for Humanity, which he and his business continue to support to this day.

In addition to their full range of ser-

vices, JWC has the only fully-certified staff in the Greater Killeen/Fort Hood area. JWC has a Certified Property Manager (CPM), a Certified Commercial Investment Member (CCIM), and a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), and a staff of over 40 others who work hard to provide the best service they can to their clients. Very much a family business, both Wright's daughter and son work on the property management side of JWC; Wright himself is also very much involved in day-to-day operations, running the commercial side of the company.

Of these employees, Jim Wright and JWC feel some of their employees deserve special recognition for going above and beyond in their hard work and dedication to both the business and their

clients, chief among them being: Jacqueline Clemons-Stubbs, Sales Manager and Associate Broker; Malaloe Vaomu, Maintenance Manager; and Suzanne Gilbert, Office Manager.

JWC is open six days a week, for the community's convenience. Their regular business hours are Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. They are closed on Sundays.

For additional information, please contact JWC directly at 254-526-5921 during regular business hours, or visit their website at www.jwcrentals.com.



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First impressions matter when selling your home, and new home buyers will judge a home by its exterior, including the garage door. This means choosing the right design is especially important. Luckily there are many designs to choose from — starting with value-priced classic styles, to premium carriage house and modern style doors—that can accommodate any home style and budget. Some exciting innovations include faux wood doors that require less upkeep than natural wood, contemporary garage doors with mid-century modern appeal, and glass garage doors for exterior views.

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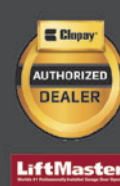
Overhead Doors is locally owned and operated since 1991 and their experienced staff can help you choose the right garage door for your home and budget. You can even upload a photo of your garage door on the Clopay imagineNation garage door visualization tool ([www.clopaydoor.com/door-imagination-system](http://www.clopaydoor.com/door-imagination-system)) to see how different styles would look on your home.

The helpful staff at Killeen Overhead Doors are happy to answer your questions and review options and pricing with you, and their technicians have over 116 years combined experience in garage door installation and repair services, providing expert installation and repairs.

Killeen Overhead Doors provides sales, service and installations for all of Bell, Lampasas and Coryell counties. To get started, visit them online at [KilleenOverheadDoors.com](http://KilleenOverheadDoors.com) or visit their showroom at 1505 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. (FM2410) next to U-Haul Mini Storage.



**New home buyers** will judge a home by its exterior, and garage doors often take center stage. It's all about curb appeal with the variety of design options you get from Clopay and perceived overall value of the home. Killeen Overhead Doors is your local authorized Clopay dealer and we can add curb appeal to any home. Visit our showroom or online at [KilleenOverheadDoors.com](http://KilleenOverheadDoors.com)



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Centex Discount Auto Repair is located at 806 N. 1st St. Copperas Cove, Texas 76522 To find out more about our quality service call: 254-278-8340. Hours: 8 a.m. — 6 p.m. Monday thru Friday. Veteran owned and managed by Clarence Page.



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# THE BENEFITS TO JOINING A LOCAL GYM



Resolving to get healthy is a worthy goal. A healthy lifestyle that includes a nutritious diet and routine exercise can improve quality of life and decrease a person's risk for various ailments, including diabetes and cardiovascular disease. In an effort to exercise more, many men and women choose to join local gyms. Such a decision can have a profound impact on efforts to get healthier, benefiting men and women in myriad ways.

## GYM MEMBERS EXERCISE MORE THAN NON-MEMBERS.

It's long been assumed that joining a gym motivates people to exercise more often, as few people want to pay monthly membership fees for facilities they don't use. But researchers at Iowa State University backed up that assumption in a study of 405 relatively healthy adults. Half of the study participants had belonged to a gym for at least 30 days, while half had not been gym members for at least three months. Participants who belonged to a gym exercised an average of 484 minutes per week, greatly exceeding the 150-minutes-per-week minimum recommended by the Department of Health and Human Services. Non-members exercised an average of just 137 minutes per week, with only 18 percent meeting the recommended weekly exercise guidelines.

## JOINING A GYM IMPROVES OVERALL HEALTH.

While common sense suggests joining a gym improves overall health, the Iowa State study actually proved that to be true. The study found that, compared to non-members, gym-goers tended to have

lower resting heart rates, higher cardiorespiratory fitness and smaller waist circumferences. Researchers found that those benefits were especially prevalent among participants who had kept their gym memberships for a year or more.

## JOINING A GYM CAN INCREASE THE CHANCES OF GETTING MORE WELL-ROUNDED WORKOUTS.

DHHS guidelines say adults need at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity and should perform muscle-strengthening exercises on two or more days each week. Non-members may be able to meet the guidelines for aerobic activity on their own, but the Iowa State study found that only about 20 percent of Americans meet guidelines for strength training. Gym memberships provide access to weights and strength-training machines that non-members do not necessarily have at home, increasing the chances that gym members will enjoy fuller, more well-rounded workouts.

## JOINING A GYM CAN BE A SOCIAL ENDEAVOR.

While many people join gyms to get healthy, it's important that prospective members not overlook the potential social benefits of gym memberships. Exercise classes hosted at local gyms can provide great opportunities to meet like-minded individuals, and such individuals may ultimately become support systems people can lean on to achieve their fitness goals.

Joining a gym can serve as a catalyst for men and women looking to get healthy.

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Farmers markets have grown in popularity in recent years. Nowadays, consumers interested in farmers markets can likely find one near their homes whether those homes are in rural communities, the suburbs or bustling cities. People who have never before shopped farmers markets may be curious as to why many people find them so appealing. The following are a handful of benefits of shopping farmers markets that might turn market novices into full-fledged devotees.

#### FRESHNESS

Many people visit farmers markets because the fruits and vegetables sold at such markets seem to taste more fresh than those sold at chain grocery stores. People are not mistaken, as the produce available at farmers markets often comes from local farms, meaning there's no long-distance shipping necessary. Locally sourced foods need not be frozen en route to the market, meaning foods purchased there tend to taste especially fresh.

#### IN-SEASON FOODS

Some grocery stores may sell fruits and vegetables even when those foods are out of season. Farmers markets only sell

in-season fruits and vegetables. To grow fruits and vegetables out-of-season, farmers may need to rely on chemicals or other unnatural methods. No such means are necessary when farmers stick to growing foods in-season.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

According to the Center for Urban Education about Sustainable Agriculture, food in the United States travels an average of 1,500 miles to get to consumers' plates. Such journeys burn natural resources, pollute the air and produce sizable amounts of trash that ultimately ends up in landfills and/or the world's oceans. Because food sold at farmers markets is locally sourced, considerably fewer natural resources are necessary to transport the food from farm to table, and the relatively short distances the food travels translates to less air pollution.

# THE BENEFITS OF SHOPPING FARMERS MARKETS

#### BIODIVERSITY

Many farmers market shoppers find unique foods not readily available at their local grocery stores. This is not only a great way to discover new and delicious foods, but also a way to promote biodiversity.

#### HORMONE-FREE ANIMAL PRODUCTS

Many farmers markets also are great places to find meats, cheeses and eggs. Animal products sold at farmers markets are typically antibiotic- and hormone-free, which is both more humane to the animals and healthier than animal products produced with hormones or antibiotics.

Farmers markets are more accessible than ever, and the benefits to shopping such markets are endless.

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# HOW COUPLES CAN BENEFIT FROM HIRING LOCAL WEDDING VENDORS



Local vendors are often a go-to choice when couples are planning their wedding ceremonies and receptions. As the “shop local” movement grows in popularity, weddings present a prime opportunity to embrace this movement.

Couples may have different ideas regarding where to tie the knot, but local vendors can be hired regardless of geography. Brides magazine says the biggest factor influencing wedding location is the size of the guest list and the number of people who wouldn’t be able to attend if the wedding was in a particular locale. Hometowns might be the traditional choice regarding wedding location, but the XO Group says one in four couples now host destination weddings. Once couples choose a town or city to host their weddings, they can begin exploring the benefits of working with locally-based vendors.

## FAMILIARITY

Local vendors will be familiar with the area and possibly even the location where the wedding will be held. That can help

couples avoid having to give directions, discuss venue protocols, and handle other tasks that must be worked out with non-local vendors. For example, local photographers familiar with a particular venue will know all of the best places to get shots, and some vendors may have preexisting relationships with venue representatives that could ensure wedding day operations go smoothly.

## PROXIMITY

Local vendors can meet with brides and grooms more readily throughout the planning process, making things less stressful on the happy couple. This also makes it easier to drop off deposits, attend meetings, make fitting appointments, or attend styling sessions.

## SAVINGS

Couples who travel for their weddings and employ local vendors will not have to pack as much. Using local vendors eliminates the need to bring along bulky dresses, decorative items, flowers, and much more. Plus, couples needn’t pay

to transport and house vendors brought along from back home.

## ENVIRONMENT

Individuals who take great strides to conserve resources by reducing their energy consumption and protecting the environment often find that shopping local is beneficial. Local vendors are more likely to source their materials from other local businesses, reducing their carbon footprints along the way. For example, local caterers may rely on local farmers for

their foods, affording couples the chance to host eco-friendly or even farm-to-table weddings.

## CUSTOMIZATION

Working with local vendors often translates into getting more personalized service and attention than mass retailers or merchants can provide. Going local when choosing wedding vendors is an increasingly popular choice among couples about to tie the knot.

*Local vendors have intimate knowledge of the areas they serve, and that can make for a more personalized, eco-friendly wedding.*

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