



Wednesday

The Best of Athens 2012 - Commerce



Photo Caption: Artifacts won Best Window Display

Best New Business

Wood Spirit Getaway

Athens best new business, **Wood Spirit Getaway**, is in the business of relaxation.

Located six miles from Athens, this two-bedroom cabin retreat allows its visitors to feel much further away from all the stress of life. Complete with log furniture, fireplace and hot tub, the cabin is outfitted for maximum comfort and relaxation for a weekend retreat.

First runner-up in this category goes to Friendly Paws Pet Supplies & Grooming, which supports local rescue by giving a portion of yearly profit to the Athens County Humane Society, and third place goes to the Athens County Habitat for Humanity in the Plains.

Forgive us for noticing but Friendly Paws ain't exactly a new business, is it? Unless we take a step back from the historical perspective, and realize that on the great continuum of eternal time, human beings have only been on this planet for a second.

Best Place to Find Hard-to-Find Items

Athens Underground

Not only does **Athens Underground** offer the hippest clothing around town, it's also the best place to find hard-to-find items.

Whether looking for some classic vinyl or a vintage apron, the store's wide selection of unique bric-a-brac will leave you with a sense of accomplishment in purchasing things they didn't even realize they were missing, as well as that orange cat ashtray they were on the hunt for.

First runner-up goes to C&E Hardware on Richland Avenue (a fine store that has that classic old hardware-store feel) and third place goes to Wal-Mart, a store where they put toothpaste and shampoo a half-mile away from the rest of town.

Best Window Display

Artifacts Gallery

With floor-to-ceiling windows perpetually filled with quirky t-shirts, outfit suggestions and light-hearted novelty items, it is no surprise that **Artifacts Gallery** draws in customers from the street with their great window displays. They won this category by a landslide. And you can't beat the helpful nature of the clerks in Artifacts.

First runner-up goes to Import House farther down North Court Street, and third place goes to Cross Court Cards & Gifts down on South Court.

Best Store With Friendly Service

Donkey Coffee & Espresso

The best place in town to get chummy with employees is **Donkey Coffee & Espresso**, where you get served more than just coffee with a smile, but are made to feel comfortable while you start, continue or finish a hectic day.

Second place goes to Fluff Bakery and Catering, on North Court Street, with their helpful staff happy to recommend their most delicious creations, and third place goes to C&E Hardware on Richland Avenue, where you can't walk 20 feet into the store without someone offering to help.

Best Store Athens Needs

Target

By a landslide, the people of Athens are calling for a **Target** store to fulfill all their non-Wal-Mart needs. This is as it was in past years, and as it always will be, so long as it remains a moment.

Runner-up in this category is Trader Joe's, a specialty grocery store that could no doubt be a positive addition to Athens with their well above union wages and health insurance coverage for employees, and delicious organic food options. Plus all that four-buck chuck.

Third place in this category goes to the clothing store Kohl's.

Best Local Advertising Campaign

Avalanche Pizza

If you read *The Athens NEWS* every week, then there is no question as to why **Avalanche Pizza** wins the best local advertising campaign hands-down.

Whether dismembering employees' fingers and sprinkling them atop a pizza or using pun-ny quips to catch reader's eyes, Avalanche's light-hearted ads never dis

Second place goes to our own *Athens NEWS*, and third place goes to Tony's Tavern, the old trusty bar over on West State Street.

Hippest Clothing Store

Athens Underground &

Artifacts Gallery

Athens Underground and **Artifacts Gallery** both win the title of hippest clothing store in Athens this year.

Whether searching dense racks of vintage clothing for the perfect ensemble at Athens Underground or browsing the bohemian clothing and tongue-in-cheek t-shi both stores are a great place to get an outfit for a special weekend.

Runner-up in this category goes to The Other Place, with their extensive selection of Tom's shoes and American Apparel, and third place goes to Fig Leaf.

Best Local Carryout

BellaVino and Stop 'N Cop

This year we have a winner in this category between the **BellaVino** fine wine and beer shop on Stimson Avenue and the **Stop 'N Cop Carryout** on Richland Aven Athens. Unless you've been living under a big flat rock, you probably know that BellaVino has been in the news lately, and probably won't be around for Best of At (though if the Incan calendar predictions come true, none of us will be around, a-square or a-triangle).

Anyway, both carryouts are great places to pick up a variety of alcohol.

First runner-up goes to the 105 Carryout on West Union Street.

Kidding. The legendary 105 is long gone. The real first runner-up is Happy Cat Carryout, with third place going to DP Dough.

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